



# *Food & Wine*

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

Issue 144

July 2022

**BRANCH FOCUS: BERKSHIRE**

**THE LOIRE – 450 MILES OF  
EXCELLENT WINES**

**REPORTS FROM ALSACE AND  
PIEDMONT FESTIVALS**

## Chairman's message



It is very welcome that IWFS is functioning again after the two-year hiatus caused by the covid pandemic. Reports of branch events and the much-postponed EAZ showcase festivals in Alsace and Piedmont can be found in the following pages. Other showcase festivals are now being developed.

We are seeking ways to broaden the footprint of IWFS – not enough people have heard of us and therefore it is difficult to attract new members. Some of our recent initiatives are directed towards this objective.

The Black Pudding Competition, organised by branches of IWFS in the North of England for six catering colleges, is underway and the winner will have been announced at a lunch at Bolton University on 28th June. We are already benefitting from the social media posts sent out by the colleges as well as interviews in local online newspapers.

We are looking at ways to improve the IWFS experience for members. The core benefit to Society membership is through our branches and their events enabling the enjoyment of good food and wine shared with friends. I hope that, based on the success of lockdown online events, we can develop further interaction for members of different branches without the need to travel.

Communication with members and potential members is essential to broaden the Society's footprint. Many of our members joined our Society because they were invited by an existing member. It would be wonderful, but probably unrealistic, for every current member to introduce a new member to the Society. We are further investigating how we can widen the use of social media across EAZ. We believe that

many potential members, including those who cannot conveniently join a branch, are more likely to find IWFS through social media linking with our website.

A new cadre of members who are interested in sharing good food and wine and learning about both is likely to want more interaction with the gastronomy industry as well as wine-tasting and dining. Our branches in the North of England, in setting up the Black Pudding Competition, have demonstrated one way in which we can create such mutually beneficial relationships and secure the Society's future through education and training. Perhaps there is more that IWFS can do with the Heptinstall charitable trust.

I want to encourage you all as members to explore and use what is already on the Society's website and accessible through the recently developed smartphone app. The Members' app links directly to the website and to specific topical pages. May I encourage you to "have a look" at the website ([www.iwfs.org](http://www.iwfs.org)) and to download the Members' app. Try the food and wine pairing button on the app (also accessible through the website). Have you read Sid's blog which has a following both in and outside the Society? Have you perused the archives – full of fascinating historical documents, wine articles and festival menus? When travelling, do you contact other branches to ask to join a local IWFS event or to seek recommendations for restaurants or vineyards? Have you explored the André Simon lectures?

Enjoy the resurgence of your branch events. Consider joining us in Torquay (22nd to 24th September 2022) for a programme of events including the AGM and Members' Forum on 24th September.

*John Nicholas*  
Chair, IWFS Europe Africa

Cover photo: Windsor Castle, Berkshire, UK

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](http://www.iwfs.org) or for information about the Society in brief visit our Wikipedia page [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International\\_Wine\\_and\\_Food\\_Society](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Wine_and_Food_Society)





# Editorial

Members will be delighted to hear that Chris Bonsall, APZ, was confirmed on 1st June 2022 as Honorary President of the Society, taking on the role from Dave Felton (Americas) whose term of office has expired. Dave recently visited UK and was welcomed by members of several branches to their events in the spring of 2022.

This first half of 2022 has been a season of festivals after two years of seriously restricted society events at branch and international level. Alsace and Piedmont were the destinations for the festivals in April and May and they were well attended: several members participated in both as the schedules allowed enough time to travel from France to Italy. Reports from both festivals are carried in this edition.

Later this year, on Saturday 24th September, the Europe Africa Ltd AGM and Annual Branch Representatives Meeting will be features of an IWFS Great Weekend which will bring members to Torbay in the county of Devon where, in partnership with Devon Branch, arrangements are in hand to meet at the Grand Hotel, Torquay. The programme of events will savour the gastronomic delights of this essentially rural county which has a fine tradition of organic crops, makes fine beers and ciders and has a growing wine industry.

Several members have mentioned arranging events or festivals on cruise ships. Apparently there are now over 500 cruise ships worldwide with a capacity in excess of 2,500,000 passengers and crew. The quality and service levels range from entry level family-orientated attractions and facilities to what is currently being promoted as 6\* luxury, predominantly focused on older age groups. There is currently a wide selection of short duration cruising opportunities being offered in the next two years which could be ideal for a three or four day IWFS festival. One member, who had travelled frequently at 4\*/5\* level prior to the pandemic, did comment that he thought the standards of food and service had not yet returned to their previous levels; insufficient and less experienced staff were cited as contributory factors. If this idea is to be pursued other members may wish to add their experiences on recent cruises.

As always, Food & Wine online and printed welcome reports, comments and requests from members. Contact details in the box below.

*Peter McGahey*  
Editor

## PUBLICATION DATES

- **Food & Wine Online (e-newsletter) Issue 18**  
August issue, deadline for copy from contributor 31st July.
- **Food & Wine (printed) Issue 145**  
October issue, deadline for copy from contributors 30th September.
- **Food & Wine Online (e-newsletter) Issue 19**  
December issue, deadline for copy from contributors 30th November.

*Please send photographs separately from text.*

*Copy for Online to sec@iwfs.org, Printed to editor.eaz@iwfs.org*

Advance notice of your events at which members of other branches would be welcome can be included, along with booking details. As always, we invite your event reports, articles and pictures.

## CORRECTION

### An English Pudding by Leonie Allday

In the previous edition we published an article 'An English Pudding'. We apologise that by mistake the author was not credited. The article was created by Leonie Allday (Bath & Bristol). We welcome this opportunity to put the record straight.

*Editor*

## Food & Wine

Food & Wine magazine  
is designed and published by  
IWFS Europe Africa Ltd

Editorial email:  
editor.eaz@iwfs.org

Printed by  
All Things Print (UK) Ltd  
Upp Hall Farm  
Salmons Lane  
2 Lower Yard  
Coggeshall  
Essex  
CO6 1RY  
www.allthingsprint.co.uk

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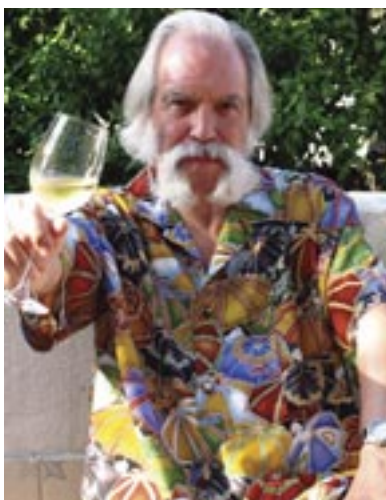
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## Contributors

### The Loire Wines – 450 miles of excellent wines by Jim Budd

After working in education Jim changed course in 1988 and started writing about wine. Over the years he has contributed to a number of magazines – Decanter being the best known. He is a past chair of the Circle of Wine Writers (CWW) and edited Circle Update, the newsletter of the CWW, from 1991 to 2015.



His particular interest is the Loire Valley and he used to spend at least three months there every year, which is now curtailed by Brexit. He is Loire's Regional Chair for The Decanter World Wine Awards. Back in 1987, as part of a group, he bought a house in the Cher Valley to the east of Tours.

His blog Jim's Loire (<http://jimsloire.blogspot.com>) concentrates on this lovely region, its wine producers and their wines. He is a

founder member of Les 5 du Vin – a co-operative wine blog (<https://les5duvin.wordpress.com>).

Jim is a keen photographer, cyclist and enjoys a wide range of music. He is also our Wines Consultant for the Loire for which we are grateful.

### Books: The Wine Lover's Daughter reviewed by Helen Mills

Helen was born in 1924 and after leaving school joined the WAAF and became a Radio Direction Finding Plotter in various locations. After demob she did a teacher training course and taught in Croydon High School. She married her fiancé Geoffrey in 1950 and had three children.

Geoff died in 1978. She carried on teaching, retiring in 1984.

Helen has been involved with the Walton and Weybridge Operatic Society for 40 years and still pursues her artistic interests. She is President of Surrey Hills.



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### IWFS EUROPE AFRICA LIMITED: ADVANCE NOTICE 2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The IWFS Europe Africa Limited 2022 Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 24th September 2022 in the Grand Hotel, Torquay. This will be followed by the Annual Branch Representatives Meeting, which is an opportunity for members to express their views on the way forward for our Society. A buffet lunch will be served. All members of EAZ are entitled to attend and vote at the AGM. Formal notice of the meeting will be sent out before the end of August.

We invite you to propose subjects for discussion at the Representatives Meeting. Please advise the EAZ Membership Secretary, [geetalloyd@gmail.com](mailto:geetalloyd@gmail.com).

I look forward to welcoming you to the AGM/ABRM and to the events around them.

*John Nicholas*

Chair, IWFS Europe Africa Limited

# News from the International Secretariat

Dear EAZ members

It is so pleasing to see that the festival season is once again up and running with the Society. Three IWFS festivals, organised by teams of dedicated members, took place in as many months. All were in top wine producing regions in Europe providing members with the chance to learn about and enjoy some of the best wine and food in the world and once again in the company of fellow members. The Europe Africa zone organised two of the trips one to Alsace and then to Piedmont – which many of you were able to attend and by all accounts went extremely well.\* These were quickly followed by the eagerly anticipated Americas Paris & Bordeaux Festival in May – another success.

Regarding updating you on international matters which is the main focus of my column. This is always a very busy time of the year at the International Secretariat office in London. The annual Wines Committee meeting was held on 2th May when the submissions from our wine consultants around the world were discussed to begin finalising our **Vintage Guide for 2023**. This year there will also be something extra to help guide you through which wines to watch out for in coming years from the 2021 (northern hemisphere) and 2022 (southern hemisphere) vintages. A summary of vintage reports from all regions featured on the Card is being compiled. Thanks go to many of our consultants who have done this for us, again giving us such information freely, and providing an informed insight into why the quality of the latest vintage has been graded as it has. The full report will be made available to members in the coming months for you to read and digest at your leisure.



**Wine & Food App:** the pairing of wine and food has been fully reviewed by an expert and professional in food and wine matchings. We do hope that you welcome the comprehensive range of matchings now available at your fingertips. Download your copy now via this link: <https://www.iwfs.org/americas/branch-resources/wine-and-food-pairing-guide-1>

**New monograph – A Guide to Modern Madeira:** we are now busy working on bringing you this modern and updated overview of madeira. Author and madeira expert, Richard Mayson has written the monograph with a view to taking “some of the mystery out of Madeira, the islands and the wines they produce”. Richard has also provided some useful wine and food matchings and which could provide inspiration for future branch events...?!

At the Americas Paris & Bordeaux festival in May members enjoyed the **2022 André Simon lecture** presented by Suzanne Mustacich, who is an author, speaker, journalist, editor and consultant. The title of this annual lecture was: The Great Comeback: French Sauces. Suzanne took the 100+ members through the history, origins and evolution of French gastronomy and sauces at the hands of the great chefs Taillevent, Varenne, Carême and Escoffier; and then bringing her research up-to-date and looking at the great comeback at the hands of top chefs such as Yannick Alléno. Please note that you can also watch Suzanne's presentation on the website via the following link: <https://www.iwfs.org/americas/publications/presentation-video-and-audio#video>

Society festivals are also an opportunity to recognise the dedicated work of members of the Society on an international and regional level. Michael Tamburri (Western Australia), Chairman of the International Council of Management (ICM) flew from Australia straight to Piedmont to join the festival goes there and then onto Bordeaux. In Piedmont, Michael presented EAZ Chairman, John Nicholas, with the **André Simon Silver medal** for his distinguished services on an international



level for the IWFS as a member of the International Council of Management (ICM) since 2015. Michael also met with incoming Honorary President Chris Bonsall (St James's and Victoria).\* From Italy he flew to Bordeaux and at the gala dinner of Paris & Bordeaux festival Michael presented Andrew Jones (Cayman Islands and New York) with the **André Simon Gold medal** in





recognition of his significant contribution to the Society serving as Chairman of IWFS Americas and subsequently the International Council of Management as well as for his work on the Americas Festivals and Events Committee and Insurance Committee.

In addition this event was also an opportunity for Michael to thank Dave Felton (Pasadena) for all his work as the Society's **Honorary President** for the past six years such as attending many festivals around the world, recently joining a number of EAZ branch events after the Paris and Bordeaux festival, and also writing a regular column in the Grapevine and more recently providing encouragement and support during the difficult time during the pandemic. Dave's successor as Honorary President is Chris Bonsall (St James's and Victoria) who took over this role from 1st June.\* I am sure you will join us in welcoming Chris into the role.

So, there is much to do and we will be bringing you a number of the items, and more, in the coming months. I hope you enjoy reading Jim Budd's comprehensive overview of the Loire Valley and its wines.\* Wishing you all a wonderful summer and all that is great in wine, food and friends.

Santé  
*Andrea*

\* reported separately in this issue.

## APPOINTMENT OF NEW IWFS HONORARY PRESIDENT



The International Council of Management (ICM) are pleased to announce the appointment of Chris Bonsall as Honorary President of the Society on 1st June 2022. Chris succeeds Dave Felton, who held the post from 2017 to 2022. The President is appointed by the ICM and the chosen individual is someone with

an expansive interest in food and wine and who encourages the international camaraderie of the Society whilst seeking to draw together its Zones in mutual harmony.

Chris has been a member of the Society for nearly 40 years, having joined the Singapore Branch in 1983. At various times he has also been a member of the Hong Kong Island Branch, the Bath & Bristol Branch, St James's Branch in London and both the Victoria and New South Wales Branches in Australia.

He has attended numerous Festivals around the world starting with the 1989 Festival in Singapore and Hong Kong. He has also organised two Festivals, being Hong Kong in 2001 (where he first met Dave and Mitsuko Felton) and Santorini in 2014. He also arranged one of the post London International Festival tours in 2018.

Chris has been active in the management of the Society, having been Chair of Hong Kong Island Branch between 1997 and 2003 and Chair of the EAC (as it then was) from 2005 to 2009. He was

also Global Chair of the IWFS at the time of its 75th anniversary in 2008 and served as Chair from 2008 to 2010, concluding his term at the end of the Sydney Festival in October 2010.

More recently Chris has, in succession to the late John Avery MW, been Chairman of the William Heptinstall Memorial fund (a charitable organisation with a close relationship and association with the Society) since 2012. He holds the André Simon Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals. He is also a member of the Society's Wine Committee, having been its Chair from 2009 to 2016, and heads up the Society's Intellectual Property Committee.

Chris is also part owner of the Stella Bella winery in Margaret River, Western Australia, which has just been named one of the top 20 wineries in Australia.

Outside the IWFS but continuing the wine and food theme Chris is a past Maître of La Commanderie de Bordeaux à Londres, having served in this position from 2013 to 2019.

He has a strong commitment to the Society and a great fondness for all things wine and food in the company of fellow enthusiasts. Chris currently divides his time between England and Australia and has been married to his wife, Sue, since 1982. They have two children, one living in London and the other near Sydney, Australia.

Chris is honoured to take on the role of President and greatly looks forward to meeting many more of the Society's members throughout the world and to attending events and Festivals during his term of office.

We hope you join us in wishing Chris all the best in this role.



# BRANCH FOCUS: BERKSHIRE

*by Ian Roe*

The inaugural meeting of the Berkshire Branch was held on 21st April 1972 at the home of Roger and Dorothy Fisher in Reading. Meetings involving some of the members had taken place in the four years before, but without any formal structure, and the meeting in 1972 was the first one to be formally constituted and the numbering of meetings began at that point. Six of the founder members are still members today, including Julian Jeffs, who was the first Chairman of the Branch and retained that role for twenty-five years until he became the Honourary President; and John Farren, who today is in charge of the branch's website and the link to the EAZ site. In addition to their wives, Deborah and Lois, other survivors of that first meeting are Carol Roffey and also Tony Curtis, to whom I am indebted, as a relatively new member of the Branch, for valuable information on its early history. Sadly, there is no record of the wines drunk at that first meeting, but in a speech to the 300th meeting it was reported that the main dish was fondue.

As Dorothy Fisher taught at Reading University, meetings of the branch were regularly held in the Senior Common Room and in the early years the focus was very much on the wine, with some meetings only having a few nibbles as accompaniment. The wines were presented by a knowledgeable member of the Branch but the aim was to encourage discussion about the wine; members would score the wines out of 10 and, unlike the most recent practice in education, scores of 10 were unheard of except for (perhaps rather surprisingly?) a Coronation bottling of Bristol Cream sherry in magnum at a tasting presented by Robin Scott-Martin of Harveys.



Over the first two decades meetings were held at a variety of venues and increasingly food was provided by a team of members. There were regular picnics and themed tastings and suppers at the boathouse at Henley Sailing Club (one couple chose to row to one of those events!); visits to local vineyards; joint meetings with other branches, especially Surrey Hills but also Northampton, Cotswolds, Bath & Bristol, and even







*Berkshire branch at Paschina, Barboursville*

Guernsey. In May 1977 a period meal was organised at the Elizabethan Manor House in Ufton Nervet, with trout in aspic, galantine of beef, and syllabub washed down with 'Rhenish, Claret and Sack'. For today's more cautious times, however, one worrying aspect of those early meetings is that they were advertised with an illustration featuring scantily clad figures (male and female) at a Bacchanalian event. More recent calling notices seem staid and uninviting by comparison!

A highlight of the first decade was a series of Burgundy tastings in 1977-78 led by the Chairman Julian Jeffs, famous for his many books on especially Spanish and Portuguese wine. The seven tastings, four on the Côte de Nuits and three on the Côte de Beaune and covering all the main communes, offered a veritable roll-call of the great names of Burgundy – one hardly dares think what a similar series of tastings would cost today! Other series of themed tastings focussed on the 1975 vintage in Germany (1980), or on Italy (1981). The early 1980s featured wines from Château Musar, including the 1967 and 1961 vintages; slightly less exotic was a tasting of English wines and food at the Museum of English Rural Life at Reading University to celebrate British Food and Farming Year in 1989.

In 1977 the Fishers had been succeeded as Secretaries by Pat and Tony Curtis, who twice served for five years either side of a short term by John Lilley, who unfortunately had to step down due to ill-health. Next came Roger Davies (1989-93) who introduced some changes, in particular the move to holding meetings at Berkshire College of Agriculture and the provision

of a two-course meal, coordinated by Caroline Turner and prepared on a rota basis by a number of members. Caroline's daughter Charlotte provided the catering for the first time in 1990 and after training in hospitality took over the catering on a permanent basis in 2002 at the new venue of Neville Hall in Waltham St Lawrence; she in turn stood down in 2018 and was replaced by Mark Robertson. Later Secretaries – Hugh and Aileen Edwards, Jack and Sheila Mansell, Ros and David Kirk – all served for four or five years until Jules and Chris Graham had a very impressive term of twelve years from 2007 to 2019 (having made at least one unsuccessful attempt to stand down earlier!). They had inherited a system under which the Secretaries ran almost all aspects of the Branch except for managing the accounts (a previous Secretary had called the arrangements 'a benevolent autocracy') but they did start a process – extended by their successor, Ian Roe – of delegating some tasks to other committee members.

The first foreign venture for the Branch was the brainchild of Colin Mair, who in May 2004 organised a tour to Brauneberg on the Mosel, staying on the estate of Wolfgang Kohl, and also going to Grevenmacher in Luxembourg to taste the sparkling wines of Bernard-Massard. This was very popular, and repeat tours were organised in 2006 by John Farren and then in 2011 by Chris Graham, on this occasion combining Wolfgang's estate with the Dagernova cooperative of Horst Bertram in the Ahr valley. Colin Mair, who in 2013 would become only the third Chairman of the Branch after Julian Jeffs and Pat Curtis, has organised two further tours, to the Veneto region in 2008 and to





Virginia in 2018, where Barboursville provided the base for visits to a number of estates in the region. In 2015 Johanna Raffan put on a tour to Navarra, and a visit to either Piedmont or Rioja is planned for 2023. Those tours have in turn led to Branch events presented by Colin Mair or Chris Graham and featuring the wines tasted on tour.

The main emphasis of the Branch has always been on wine; we are very definitely not a dining club! Recent decades have seen an increasing move to inviting outside speakers to present wines, whether wine experts or merchants. In the last full year before the pandemic we were pleased to welcome both Charles Metcalfe and Quentin Sadler, and Beverley Blanning MW hosted an excellent event on Zoom during one of the lockdowns; and we have enjoyed regular visits in recent years from Tony Hill (Bordeaux and Beyond), Martin Chapman (now Watlington Wines), Duncan Ross (Berkmann Wine Cellars), Simon Taylor (Stone Vine & Sun), Mark Hughes (Real Wine Company), and many others. Alongside the professional presentations we have continued to have one or two events a year presented by members willing to stand up in public. In the last ten years these have included Doug Miles, until recently our Vice-Chairman, who has presented on Alsace, Bordeaux, and the Rhône; or his immediate successor Chris Gutch on Japanese sake, Bordeaux and (with John Farren) on the Cos estate in Sicily; Alex Corrin put on a vertical tasting of Domaine de Tollot Beaut; and Ian Roe has presented the wines of Germany and of Austria.

Despite the foregrounding of wine, two events a year are usually meals at local restaurants, in some cases arranged to coincide with significant milestones: lunch at Cliveden for the

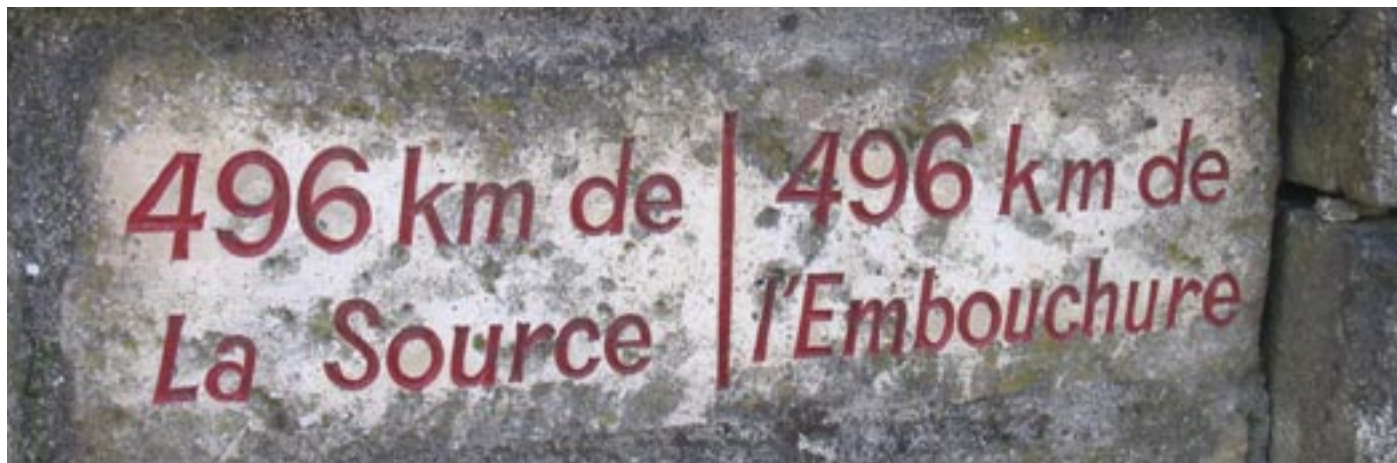
300th meeting in 2007 and at the Waterside for the 400th in 2017 (an event that was preceded by our Chairman giving an organ recital at the nearby church in Bray). Summer events have included visits to the Bothy Vineyard in 2011 (previously owned by the Fishers, so very much revisiting the origins of the Branch), Stanlake Park estate in 2012, or tastings at Henry Laithwaite's Harrow & Hope vineyard in Marlow in 2014 and 2018; and in 2019 we visited Waddesdon Manor for a tasting of wines in the cellars followed by lunch at the Five Arrows Hotel. While the early decades of the Branch saw regular demonstrations of cookery skills by college chefs, more recently we had presentations on chocolate, bread making and even decorative sugar craft by Frank de Mengel, who in October 2016 created a large chocolate HMS Victory for an excellent Trafalgar Night celebration that featured wines from the cellar of Carol and Ted Roffey, with of course Beef Wellington as the main course.

Our meeting in April 2022 was – almost to the day – fifty years after the first meeting. What has changed over those five decades? A focus on the traditional wine regions of the Old World has given way to a global approach to the wine world: events in the last twelve months have featured wines from Greece, Lebanon, Chile, Argentina and New Zealand alongside Italy, Spain and France. Informal events at which members discussed the wines in some detail have given way to more professional presentations. But there is still a considerable variety in the events, we are still in search of the wine that scores 10/10 and, most importantly, the meetings remain popular. Plans are almost finalised for the 450th meeting, to be held in July at the Crooked Billet pub in Stoke Row; and we are already looking forward to the 500th meeting!



# THE LOIRE – 450 MILES OF EXCELLENT WINES

by *Jim Budd*



With a few exceptions, Loire wines have long tended to fly under the radar. They have often been under appreciated and their ageing potential frequently underestimated. It is also a misconception to think that the Loire essentially makes white wines: overall 55% of production is white, while 45% is red or rosé.

With vineyards stretching over 450 miles the distances involved makes it a challenge to get to know the Loire well. Furthermore, unlike for instance Bordeaux, Burgundy or Languedoc-Roussillon, there are few lengthy stretches of concentrated vineyards. With the exception of Anjou and the Pays Nantais, pockets of concentrated vines often a considerable distance from the next area are more characteristic.

Historically many Loire wines have been described as light and fruity to be drunk young with Chenin Blanc being an exception, especially the sweet ones. In fact many Loire wines – both red and white – age remarkably well for decades rather than just a few years. Back in 2012 I was lucky enough to taste Bourgueils from Lamé Delisle Boucard back to 1893 – still amazing even if not quite still in its prime!

Equally many Loires can be enjoyed young, especially those designed to be a cuvée printemps.

Over the now nearly 35 years I have been writing about the Loire the overall quality of the wines has undoubtedly improved. This has been due to a number of factors: improvements in viticulture, vinification but perhaps most importantly better educated producers who have been through wine school and had experience in working in vineyards around the world. Despite the challenges the Loire's climate can pose more and more excellent producers are now organic or biodynamic or in the process of conversion.

Probably due to global warming the Loire has been blessed from 2014 to 2021 with a quite unprecedented, unbroken series of good to very good vintages. Unfortunately this has come at a severe cost – a much greater risk of spring frosts. Between 2016 and 2021 only 2018 and 2020 have been essentially frost-free. Fortunately there are now many more frost protection systems

in place than there were seven or eight years ago but frost is still a big problem.

## UPPER LOIRE

Travelling from the source of the Loire, which is around a 100 kilometres from the Mediterranean, you come to the four Upper Loire vineyards – Côtes de Forez, Côte Roannaise, Côtes d'Auvergne and Saint-Pourçain. All are now small but well worth exploring as they are in the middle of an exciting renaissance.

Historically these were more important, especially the Puy de Dôme department (Auvergne), which in the latter part of the nineteenth century had the fourth largest area under vines in France.

The first three appellations are on a level with Lyon and the vineyards of the Northern Rhône, while Saint-Pourçain aligns with Maçon. Although Gamay is the dominant grape here there are an interesting range of varieties including those from the northern Rhône like Syrah, Roussanne and Viognier sold as vin de pays or vin de France.

### *Some recommended producers:*

**Côte d'Auvergne:** Les Chemins d'Arkose, Desprat Saint-Verney – the largest producer in the Auvergne with a big range of wines, Benôit Montel, Annie Sauvat.

**Côtes de Forez:** Les Vins de la Madone (Gilles Bonnefoy) Verdier & Logel – range of wines including some Riesling.

**Côte Roannaise:** Domaine des Pothiers (Roman Paire). Domaine Robert Sérol (Stéphane and Carine Sérol).

**Saint-Pourçain:** Domaine des Berioles (Jean Teissedre) – includes fine Pinot Noir and Tressalier (local grape variety).

## CENTRAL VINEYARDS

This is the first substantial and well-known area of vines. Pouilly-sur-Loire marks the halfway point of the Loire's journey to the Atlantic. The appellations of Pouilly-Fumé, Coteaux du Giennois, Sancerre and Menetou-Salon are roughly grouped together, while Quincy and Reuilly are well to the south west





close to the town of Vierzon. Considerably to the south of Bourges is the small Châteaumeillant appellation.

Along with Pinot Noir this is the kingdom of Sauvignon Blanc, which should not be pungently catty but rather with notes of grapefruit and stone fruits. Prior to phylloxera red varieties dominated, especially Pinot Noir that now makes up a little over 20% in Sancerre and a higher percentage in Menetou-Salon. Over the last 25 years the quality of Pinot Noir has improved very significantly not just in Sancerre but also in Menetou-Salon and Reuilly and is now providing competition to Burgundy.

There is no doubt that Sancerre is the Loire's most successful and easiest to sell appellation. Although some critics claim that Sancerre producers sit on their laurels, this is not at all my experience. Instead I am always impressed by the commitment and determination of top producers, such as the Pinards, Gérard Boulay and the Bourgeois family, to continuously improve their wines.

With its rolling hills and steep slopes Sancerre is the most picturesque of the Loire's appellations, especially in October with the autumn colours. Unlike Sancerre, whose eponymous town is a central point, Pouilly-Fumé lacks a focus. The vineyards run north-south and are split in two by the Autoroute 77. Pouilly-sur-Loire is a now sad little place with faded memories of when the Route Bleue (N7) ran through the town taking Parisians holiday-makers to the Mediterranean. The town was a popular stop on their journey.

### *Some recommended producers:*

**Sancerre:** Berthier, Famille Bourgeois, Gérard Boulay, François Crochet, Vincent Delaforce, Bernard Fleuriot, Alphonse Mellot, Joseph Mellot, Vincent Pinard, Vacheron.

**Pouilly-Fumé:** Domaine Didier Dagueneau now run by Benjamin and Charlotte Dagueneau (deep pockets essential), Jonathan Pabiot, Masson-Blondelet, Alain Cailbourdin, Michel Redde, Serge Dagueneau et filles.

**Coteaux du Giennois:** Émile Balland, Villargeau.

**Menetou-Salon:** Philippe Gilbert, Bertrand Minchin, Henry Pellé, Prieurie de Saint-Cérols.

**Quincy:** Siret-Courtaud, Domaines Tatin.

**Reuilly:** Denis Jamain (Domaine Reuilly), Claude Lafond.

### **TOURAINE**

Touraine divides conveniently into two distinct parts: east of Tours and the Cabernet Franc appellations west of Tours close to Anjou-Saumur.

#### **Eastern Touraine:**

Apart from Vouvray, the majority of vineyards are between the Loire and both sides of the Cher Valley. Although the majority of the production of both Vouvray and Montlouis is sparkling of variable quality, there are world-class examples – dry, demi-sec and sweet – of still Chenin Blanc from these two appellations



*The Boulay family during harvest on the steep slopes of the Cul de Beaujeu*

with a huge aging potential. In 2009 we celebrated my late father's 90th birthday with a 1919 Le Mont Moelleux from Huet. It was still remarkably youthful.

Away from Vouvray and Montlouis, Sauvignon Blanc dominates in Appellation Touraine. At its best it offers a good value alternative to Pouilly-Fumé and Sancerre. For the reds Côt (known in other parts of the world as Malbec) is the most successful variety here with the potential to age for several decades. Côt/Cabernet Franc is a successful blend, while Gamay can be a delicious wine.

#### Le Loir

This tributary of La Loire is some 40 kilometres north of Tours and is the Loire's most northerly vineyard. It is home to three small appellations – Coteaux Vendômois, Coteaux du Loir and the best known Jasnières, which produces to age dry to sweet Chenin Blanc depending on the vintage.

#### Some recommended producers:

**Vouvray:** Michel Autran, Vincent Carême, Champalou, Philippe Foreau, Bernard Fouquet, Domaine Huet, François Pinon.

**Montlouis:** Jacky Blot (Domaine de la Taille aux Loups), François Chidaine, Xavier Weisskopf. Both Blot and Chidaine make excellent Vouvray that has to be labelled as Vin de France due to idiotic local politics.

#### Touraine including village appellations like Touraine

**Chenonceaux:** Cellier de Beaujardin, Joël Delaunay, Xavier Frissant, Lionel Gosseume, Jean-François Mériaux, Vincent Ricard, Vincent Roussely, Domaine Sauvète.

**Jasnières:** Domaines – Bellivière, Roche Bleue.

#### Western Touraine:

Cabernet Franc dominates here in Bourgueil, Chinon and Saint-Nicolas-de-Bourgueil. Although Chinon tends to be the most mellow of these three red appellations, the most important differences come from the type of soil. Sandy soils giving the lightest wines, those from the clay limestone slopes the most structured and longest lived and, in between, those from gravel soils. Single vineyard wines have become increasingly important.

#### Some recommended producers:

**Chinon:** Philippe Alliet, Bernard Baudry, Baudry-Dutour, Couly-Dutheil, Nicolas Grosbois, Jourdain-Picard, Moulin à Tan, Domaine de la Noblaie, Domaine de Pallus.

**Bourgueil:** Domaine de la Butte (Jacky and Jean-Philippe Blot) Xavier Courant, Domaine de la Chevalerie, Lamé Delisle Boucard, Château de Minière.

**Saint-Nicolas-de-Bourgueil:** Xavier Amirault, Yannick Amirault, Sébastien David, Domaine Frédéric Mabileau, Taluau et Foltzenlogel.

(Many Bourgueil and Saint-Nicolas-de-Bourgueil have vines in both appellations.)

#### SAUMUR

This is the centre of the Loire's sparkling wine production with producers like Ackermann, Bouvet-Ladubay, Gratien et Meyer (owned by Henkell Freixenet) and Langlois-Chateau (owned by Bollinger) being the equivalent of Champagne houses. After a slow start from its creation in 1975 Crémant de Loire is now the Loire's leading sparkling appellation.

Aside from sparkling there are some very good reds (Cabernet Franc) and whites (Chenin Blanc). The transformation of the Clos



Part of a tasting back to 1893 (1947-1893) in June 2012





*Emptying the hod, 2018 harvest at Domaine Luneau-Papin*

Rougeard into a cult wine when under the ownership of Nady and the late Charly Foucault has made Saumur and Saumur-Champigny world famous. Clos Rougeard is now owned by the Bouyges brothers. Fortunately you don't have to pay a fortune to get good quality from other Saumur producers.

Some recommended producers:

**Saumur and Saumur-Champigny:** Domaine de la Bonnelière, Domaine Filliatreau, Antoine Foucault, Arnaud Lambert, Domaine de Nerleux, Rocheville, Clos Rougeard (deep pockets essential), Domaine de Roches Neuves, Antoine Sanzay, Châteaux de Parnay, Targé, Villeneuve and Yvonne.

**Sparkling wines including Crémant de la Loire – not just from Saumur:** Ackerman, Bouvet Ladubay, Château de l'Aulée, Langlois-Chateau.

## ANJOU

Anjou marks the change from the clay-limestone soils of the Paris Basin to the hard impervious soils of Brittany – schist, granite, slate, etc. This change of rock formation produces red wines with more tannins, which can be tough and bitter if not handled properly, and soft acidity for the whites. Anjou is known for its clement climate – La Douceur Angevin. Spring starts early here – an advantage offset by the danger of Spring frosts! Unusually for the Loire Cabernet Sauvignon ripens properly here on warm, well-exposed sites. Except for dreadful autumns like 2012 it is possible to make sweet wines in almost every vintage, which is not the case in Vouvray and Montlouis. World-class examples include those from Bonnezeaux and the Quarts de Chaume.

Anjou has a wide range of wines in all three colours. Dry Chenin Blanc is increasingly important and impressive as producers in the Coteaux du Layon limit the amount of sweet wine they made due to lack of demand for these wines even from vineyards like the famous Quarts de Chaume. Naturally this includes producers from Savennières. The best reds are Anjou-Villages, especially Anjou-Villages-Brissac.

### *Some recommended producers:*

Domaines Belargus, Bergerie, Bablut, Closel, Domaine FL, Juchepie, aux Moines, Ogereau, Rochelles, Damien Laureau, Château Pierre-Bise.

## PAYS NANTAIS

There have always been good Muscadets – it is just that now there are many more of them. My first ever professional visit was to the Pays Nantais in a cold February 1989. I met a number of impressive producers including Louis Métaireau and Jean-Ernest Sauvion and tasted Muscadets back to the mid-1950s.

Well-made Muscadet offers diversity and great value: from simple fresh wines for shellfish to the complex Cru Communaux that have extended lees aging – up to 24 months minimum is required in certain communes like Clisson and Gorges. The best have the potential to age and develop over two or three decades.

### *Some recommended producers:*

Bonnet-Huteau, Gadais, Herbauges, Jérémie Huchet, Jo Landron, Famille Lieubeau, Luneau-Papin, Pepière.

All photos: Jim Budd

# ALSACE FESTIVAL REPORT

by Dr Gordon Lloyd, Dip. WSET



Monday 25th April, the first day of the festival, dawned cool and wet with rain for most of the day. However, a clear spell mid-afternoon allowed some of the early birds from our collection of about forty EAZ and independent members, with a good representation from the USA, to explore the charms of the medieval centre of Colmar, where we were staying. Then the rains returned in force, clearing the street of tourists.

Our base was Hotel Le Maréchal (pictured above), a wonderful, rambling structure, dating from 1565 and full of character, with an intricate web of passageways and staircases requiring a map to navigate. Fortunately, with the incessant rain outside, our dinner that night was at Le Maréchal's A L'Echevin restaurant. However, the Welcome Cocktail planned for outside in the hotel's courtyard had to be abandoned.

The wines at dinner followed a pattern that would soon be recognisable in the festival's subsequent tastings. We started with a Jean-Claud Buecher Crémant D'Alsace (deliciously

creamy, having spent 57 months on the lees) before progressing to an off-dry 2019 Maison Martin Jund Pinot Gris, which perfectly matched the pâté starter. The acidity of the 2017 Windmuehl Pinot Noir offset the sweetness of the duck and orange sauce main course, before finishing with a medium-sweet 2018 Bott Frères Gewurztraminer with the dessert.

By Tuesday morning the weather had greatly improved and became ever warmer and more pleasant throughout the rest of the festival. An early (08:30 hours!!) start took us to our first appointment in Rouffach at the winery of Domaine Muré. The estate includes vineyards in the Grand Crus Vourbourg, where it is the sole owner of the walled vineyard Clos Saint Landelin (pictured below); one of the best sites in Alsace, and Zinnkoepfle, which is adjacent to Vourbourg. Muré also has sites in the Lieu-dit Steinstuck and the Côte de Rouffach. Total holdings are 28 ha, of which Clos Saint Landelin comprises 12 ha. We started with a NV Crémant d'Alsace which was slightly



lacking in intensity. Next was a 2018 Côtes de Rouffach Riesling which lacked fruit to balance the high acidity. By contrast the 2018 Riesling Clos Saint Landelin GC which followed was much fuller-bodied, with more pronounced fruit flavours and structure, showing the step up from an AOC to a GC. We also tasted a 2017 Pinot Noir from grapes grown on a GC site (but of course only labelled AOC Alsace), as well as a superb Clos Saint Landelin Grand Cru 2017 Gewurztraminer Vendange Tardive.

We then drove to Guebwiller to visit Domaine Schlumberger, the largest private estate in Alsace with 144 ha under vines, including Grand Cru sites in Saering, Kitterlé, Kessler and Spiegel. Their modern winery had many large fudres for the fermentation of much of their white wines as well as a significant installation of (temperature controlled) steel tanks.

A tasting of six wines followed in the atmospheric surroundings of a cask-lined cellar. The flight started with AOC Alsace Pinot Blanc and Riesling wines under the 'Les Princes Abbés' brand which were fresh with moderate fruit flavours and dry. We progressed to an off-dry 2012 GC Kitterlé Gewurztraminer and a medium sweet 2020 'Les Princes Abbés' Gewurztraminer. The







tasting ended with a beautifully balanced 2015 VT 'Cuvée Eric' Riesling and a 2018 VT 'Cuvée Christine' Gewurztraminer. An interesting tasting but geared towards those with a sweet tooth.

After an intense morning we were promised a light lunch at the restaurant L'Angelus à Guebwiller. The starter of charcuterie and salad certainly met any criterion of lightness. However, plates of braised and roasted pork shanks (weighing at least a kilo each) nestled on copious quantities of sauerkraut and accompanied by bucket loads of pommes frites and fried egg noodles, then appeared. Some of our number wilted at the sight of this feast and had to reach for the smelling salts. However, there were a few true trenchermen who downed the lot in good IWFS tradition, declaring it excellent.

After struggling out of the restaurant, a short bus trip brought us to Eguisheim, the first of several enchanting medieval villages we would visit. It was originally a Roman fort and has claims to be the cradle of French viticulture. However, our principal destination was the winery of Domaine Emile Beyer.

The Domaine has sites in the Grand Crus Pfersigberg and Eichberg, which represent a third of the planted area, as well as in the Lieu-Dits Hohrain, Sundel and Saint Jacques. Seated casually in a rough circle around the walls of an old cellar, we tasted a flight of six wonderful wines, characterised by intensity of well-defined fruit, balance and long finish. We started with a N.V. Pinot Blanc/Chardonnay blended Crémant d'Alsace followed by a 2019 Eguisheim Pinot Noir. The Eguisheim range of wines are produced from estate-grown grapes from old vines, which accounts for the high quality of this range. We also tasted two Gewurztraminers. The first was a 2019 'Tradition' (wines in a fruity style designed to be drunk young) in a medium dry style with Gewurztraminer's characteristic bitterness on the palate. The second Gewurztraminer was a 2018 VT, which was sweet.

Two wines, however, really stood out. The first was a 2020 Riesling Lieu-Dit Saint Jacques followed by a 2020 Pinot Gris Lieu-Dit Hohrain, clearly illustrating the high quality achievable in Lieu-Dits wines despite lacking a GC label.

Tuesday night's dinner was at the Restaurant Bartholdi, a short walk from the hotel through Colmar's winding streets. The format of the meal itself was conventional. However, the pairing of each course with generous quantities of two different wines was slightly novel, although not unwelcome. Our host, ever attentive to the well-being of his guests, liberally sampled each wine himself before serving it, to ensure that no inferior wine reach our delicate palates. As the evening progressed, he became increasingly tired and emotional, so that, on our departure, he was only able to remain upright by clutching onto the bar, under the sulphurous glare of his wife.

We started with a prawn and grapefruit cocktail, accompanied by a 2018 Gustav Lorentz 'Evidence' Pinot Gris and a Cattin Riesling 'Pur de Roche' Riesling. Poached salmon on a bed of rice with a cream sauce followed, so plentiful that we could have then moved straight on to desserts. The wines were a 2018 Domaine Weinbach Schlossberg Riesling GC and a 2017 Amelie and Charles Sparr Riesling Lieu-Dit Altenbourg.

We then progressed to a superb, yet simple, Beef Entrecôte with Pommes Dauphinoise, paired with a 2011 Vin Rouge Alsace, 'Cuvée Du Vicus Romanus' Pinot Noir from Aiméstentz and a 2018 Paul Ginghamer 'Les Rocailles', Eguisheim, Pinot Noir. At this point your correspondent's notetaking became totally illegible, unsurprising considering the rivers of wine that had washed over us. I seem to remember several desserts being offered, including strawberries, together with a 2018 Freudenreich 'Cuvée Barbera' Gewurztraminer, which was most assuredly delicious. After this superb and entertaining evening, I



understand, but cannot confirm, that most members succeeded in finding their way back to the hotel. Nobody fell into the canals.

A mercifully, slightly later start on Wednesday brought us to the winery of Jean-Louis Schoepfer in Wettolsheim. Although dating from 1656, the estate is relatively small with a total of 10 ha under vines, of which 0.6 ha is in the Grand Cru Hengst. The Domaine produces about 50-60,000 bottles/yr. The winery is comparatively unsophisticated. Fermentation is predominantly carried out in old oak casks but also some stainless-steel tanks, all without temperature regulation.

A tasting of five wines started with a Crémant d'Alsace from 100% Pinot Blanc. With yeasty notes and a longish finish this was a good wine. Next came a 2019 dry Muscat which disappointingly lacked body and finish. The 2017 Riesling 'Cuvée Spéciale' similarly lacked body, intensity and length.

Finally, two Hengst GC wines did not disappoint. An off-dry, 2015 Pinot Gris, was a classic. Likewise, the off-dry 2016 Gewurztraminer was very good quality. This highlights once again the quality potential of Grand Cru sites.

From Wettolsheim a short ride took us to Voegtlinshoffen and the Joseph Cattin winery. This is one of the largest family-owned estates in Alsace with 70 ha under vine, of which 3.5 ha is in the Hatschbourg GC and holdings in the village of Steinbach, noted for its powerful Pinot Noirs. Production is 3 million bottles/year, of which 1 million Crémant d'Alsace and 2 million still. Cattin purchases about 80% of its grapes from other growers, creating potential quality inconsistencies. The winery had a large installation of stainless-steel, temperature-controlled tanks for fermentation and over 30 fudres ranging from 45 to 110 hl for the ageing of white wines (3-6 months). Pinot Noir is aged in 500 litre casks.

After the winery visit, we retired to Cattin's new, modernistic and spacious Belvedere tasting complex which, true to its name, offered commanding views over the Alsatian countryside, even as far as the Black Forest across the border in Germany. Here we were offered seven wines, during which we were served a genuinely light lunch of charcuterie and cheese, which heightened the overall tasting experience.

The first of the two Crémants d'Alsace was the 2019 Brut Millésemé 'Grand Cuvée' from 80% Pinot Blanc and 20% Chardonnay. Well-balanced fruit and acidity and a long finish made for a very good wine. The second crémant, the N.V. Brut Rosé, with less fruit intensity and shorter finish, was less impressive.

Next were two excellent Rieslings. The first was the 2020 Lieu-Dit Elsbourg with its pronounced aromas of petrol, lime, apple and peach, high acidity and long finish. The next was the 2015 'Cuvé Pur de Roches', Sélection Parcellaire from a calcareous marl site near to Voegtlinshoffen. With a similar aroma profile to the Elsbourg it was even more intense and excellent quality.

A 2018 Rouge d'Alsace Pinot Noir, Steinbach, grown in the iron-rich soils around the village of Steinbach, with aromas of red

fruits and forest floor, restrained, silky tannins and a long finish was a very good wine.

A disappointing 2020 medium dry Pinot Gris, lacking balance and intensity, with only a medium finish, was followed, however, by a 2018 Gewurztraminer VT in complete contrast, exhibiting much greater fruit concentration and a long finish.

Lunch over, we departed Cattin, with fond memories of their very generous wine measures. A short journey took us to Domaine Weinbach in Kaysersberg, where we met Théo Leibe-Faller, son of the owner. The Domaine was formed in 1612 when a Capuchin monastery (which the current winery occupies) was founded. It was purchased by Faller for his bears in 1898. Weinbach is one of the premier estates in Alsace due to the high percentage of its plantings being in Grand Cru or Lieu-Dit sites. The estate, farmed organically, consists of 38 ha, of which 10 ha are on the comparatively sandy valley floor beneath the Schlossberg hill, 10 ha on the Grand Cru Schlossberg itself and the remainder in the Grand Crus Furstentum and Mambourg and the Lieu-Dit Altenbourg.

Encapsulating the localised geological diversity of Alsace, the south-facing Schlossberg in front of the winery has largely acidic, granitic soils where Riesling thrives, while just to its right lies Furstentum with much whiter limestone, marl and sandstone soils and ideal for Pinot Gris and Gewurztraminer. Altenbourg, just beneath Furstentum, is calcareous marl whilst Mambourg, to the right of Furstentum, is mainly marl, limestone and stony and largely planted with Gewurztraminer. 50% of total plantings are Riesling, 15% each Pinot Gris and Gewurztraminer, 10% Pinot Blanc and 5% Pinot Noir. Only estate grown grapes are used for wine production.

Leaving the vineyard, we moved on to an excellent and informative tasting of nine wines, starting with a 2020 Clos des Capucins Pinot Noir which, with aromas of vanilla, cedar, red cherry and raspberry and light, silky tannins, was a good wine.

Five Rieslings followed, that captured perfectly the diverse expressions of the variety in Alsace. We progressed from a 2020 Cuvée Théo Alsace AOC from the sandy valley floor between the winery and the Schlossberg, through a Cuvée Colette Alsace AOC grown at the base of the Schlossberg to a 2020 Riesling Schlossberg GC grown near the top of the Schlossberg



*Schlossberg with the sandy valley floor beneath the slope*





slope. The first wine had stone fruit aromas and lacked structure and concentration. The next two wines had high acidities, more typical aromas of lime, apple, some stone fruit and minerality, fuller bodies and ever longer finishes, showing the impact of different soils and aspects on the final quality of a wine. Next was a 2005 Riesling, Schlossberg GC which was as fresh as the 2020 Grand Cru and with similar characteristics, except for pronounced tertiary petrol aromas. The final Riesling was a 2004 VT. The medium dry style had intense aromas of lime and apple with tertiary aromas of petrol, honey and marmalade with a long finish. An outstanding and well-structured wine.

A 2020 Pinots Furstentum GC, a blend of Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc and Auxerrois was next. The wine, although good, underwhelmed for a Grand Cru, lacking intensity and fruit definition. A 2020 Pinot Gris Cuvée Ste. Catherine Alsace AOC followed. Off-dry and with typical pear and red apple aromas, a medium body and finish, this was a good wine. We finished with a 2020 Gewurztraminer Cuvée Lawrence AOC Alsace in a medium dry style and the imprint of a good, a classic Gewurztraminer.

No restaurant had been organised for Wednesday evening to allow for some R and R. Notwithstanding this one group of stalwarts, endowed with an iron stamina, were unable to resist the temptation of a seven-course tasting menu in a local restaurant.

Thursday morning saw several of the group struck down by a mystery bug and confined to the hotel, including your correspondent, who is indebted to Leonie Allday for providing her notes on Dopff. The bus went straight to Riquiwihr to visit Domaine Dopff Au Moulin and to celebrate its special connection to IWFS. At the first event of the Society in January 1934, a banquet for 400 was held, in which three wines from the Dopff vineyard were presented. Founded in 1574, the 13th generation of Dopffs, in the person of Etienne, now runs the

Domaine, of which 50% of the output is Crémant, with more varieties than any other producer. Out of the total of 70 ha of the Domaine, 9 ha are on the SE-facing Schoenbourg GC, where all four noble grapes are grown, as well as vineyards on Sporen GC for Gewurztraminer. Dopff produces 1.6 million bottles/year of which estate-produced grapes account for only 35%, the remainder being purchased. Dopff played a fundamental role in developing exports from Alsace, leading to the design of the characteristic fluted Alsatian bottle, as well as the production of Crémant.

A noisy tasting of eight wines followed, during which the group became steadily more animated due to Dopff's generous measures. A creamy 2018 Blanc de Noirs (100% Pinot Noir) had raspberry aromas and a very fine mousse. Next was a 2018 Cuvée Bartholdi (40% Chardonnay, 60% Pinot Blanc) with citrus notes and pronounced yeast. The first of two Rieslings was the 2016 Riesling GC Schoenbourg, very aromatic with petrol, citrus and mineral notes and perfect balance and the best Riesling tasted so far. The 2015 Vendange Tardive that followed had pronounced tropical and dried fruit aromas and was elegantly rich, with a long finish.

The first of two Pinot Gris was a 2017 'Coeur de Barriques' with aromas of raisins, vanilla, spice and almonds, a full body and long finish, the best Pinot Gris so far. The next was a 2018 Pinot Gris Schoenbourg GC, very aromatic with stone fruit, gingerbread and a long finish. The final two wines were Gewurztraminers. A 2016 Sporen GC had aromas of lychees, honey and spice with well balanced acidity. The next, a 2018 GC VT, was floral with aromas of lychees, rose, sweet apples.

Overall, the Dopff tasting was superb.

After a light lunch at D'Brendelstube there was time to wander the enchanting streets of Riquiwihr before returning early to the hotel to find that all the patients had miraculously risen from

their sick beds just in time for dinner at the 2 Michelin starred Auberge de L'III.

A cocktail of Mittmacht Frères Crémant d'Alsace awaited us on arrival in the restaurant's riverside garden, replete with flowers and drooping willow trees, where the EAZ Chairman, John Nicholas, presented David Ling, the former Grand Master of the Confrérie Saint-Etienne, with an EAZ Excellence Diploma

We were then ushered inside for the main event which started with L'émietté de tourteau, gel de citron-pamplemousse et emulsion à la coriander served with a 2019 Riesling, Altenberg de Bergbieten GC, Schmitt. Le saumon soufflé 'Auberge de L'III' followed accompanied by a 2011 Riesling Alsace Grossi Laüe, Hugel. The main course was Le tournedos de pigeon (France) au foie, chou et truffes paired with 2012 Pinot Noir Alsace Les Saintes Claires Mann. The dessert was a beautifully crafted Pêche Haeberlin with a 2017 Muscat Alsace VT Muré. The superb evening ended with coffee, petits fours and chocolates.

It was Friday morning, and we were off to Domaine Gilg in Zotzenberg. Founded in 1572 and with 30 ha and plots in the Zotzenberg GC, Gilg only uses estate grown grapes. Total production is 220,000 bottles/year, of which 30% is Crémant. Most of Gilg's vineyards are calcareous marl. Unusually for Alsace, Gilg has used concrete tanks for fermentation since 1953.

We tasted six wines. A 2018 Crémant Brut was only interesting in that it was made from 30% Pinot Gris, 40% Auxerrois and 30% Riesling (for its acidity). A dry 2020 Riesling Vieilles Vignes was at best ordinary. Next was a disappointing, off-dry 2020 Klevener de Heiligenstein. Despite pronounced aromas of floral, lime, apple and stone fruit, it lacked acidity, intensity on the palate and finish and was flabby. A 2019 off-dry Sylvaner GC Zotzenberg lacked acidity to balance the sugar and fruit intensity. However, a medium-dry 2018 Pinot Gris GC Zotzenberg was a very good wine, balanced and with a longish finish. Likewise, a sweet 2019 Gewurztraminer GC Zotzenberg

had classic Gewurztraminer characteristics and a longish finish.

We then headed to Itterweiler for a delicious, early lunch at the Restaurant Emmensbuckel before our final tasting at Domaine Bott Frères in Ribeauville. The Domaine, founded in 1835, has 18 ha of sustainably cultivated vineyards, with plots in the GCs Kirchberg, Geisberg and Osterberg, producing 180,000 bottles/year. Like Gilg, Bott has concrete tanks for fermentation, along with stainless-steel tanks and fudres. 50% of their sales are cellar door and much of the remainder to restaurants.

We tasted five wines, all of which were classic examples of their variety and style and either very good or outstanding. A Crémant D'Alsace Brut 'Cuvée Nicole' from Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris was followed by a dry 2021 Muscat and a 2018 Riesling 'Tradition'. A dry 2018 Riesling GC Kirchberg was outstanding, with pronounced flavours of lime, apple and petrol, fullish body and a very long finish. Finally, a medium-sweet 2018 Gewurztraminer 'Réserve Personelle' completed a very memorable tasting.

We then returned to the hotel in preparation for our final event at the Confrérie Saint-Etienne D'Alsace at the Château Lazare de Schwendi in Kientenheim.

The Confrérie, originally a craft guild responsible for quality control of Alsace wines from the medieval period, now promotes the wines world-wide. David Ling, a British and first foreign-born former Grand Master of the Confrérie, set up the excellent winery visits during the festival. We visited the château's wine museum with its array of artisanal equipment from the nineteenth and early twentieth century before being ushered for an audience with members of the Confrérie.

As five of them paraded in adorned with red robes, black, broad-rimmed hats with golden chains hanging from their necks, there were strangled cries of "I didn't expect the Spanish Inquisition". But instead of the response "Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition" and torture by poking with soft cushions, being seated in the comfy chair with coffee at 11 o'clock, we had a wonderful tasting of wines from the Confrérie's cellar of over 60,000 bottles. After each wine we all celebrated with a drinking song. The most memorable wine was an outstanding 1992 Riesling GC with fresh, pronounced aromas of lime, apple, petrol and honey, full-bodied and a long finish. There was then a blind tasting of a single wine with a prize for the nearest guess. Whilst many got a pinot Gris, it was appropriately Stephanie Shepherd, our festival organiser, whose guess of 1992 came closest to the true vintage of 1990.

We then enjoyed a traditional dinner starting with pike-perch on sauerkraut, followed by Cordon Bleu (made with Munster cheese) accompanied by steamed vegetables and pommes purées and ending with apple strudel, ice cream and cream.

After breakfast on Saturday morning this most enjoyable and memorable festival had to end with some of the participants returning home. However, twelve indestructibles went on to the Piemonte festival, starting two days later, while our American friends moved on to their Bordeaux festival, via Paris, evidence of true IWFS fortitude.







# THE PIEDMONT FESTIVAL

*by Chris Bonsall*

Wet on the inside and on the outside might perhaps be the appropriate title as we experienced both over five interesting days in the Langhe region in Piemonte. This was the first Festival organised by Phillip Kim of London Branch, ably assisted by his wife Susan Urkevich and, if he wants time off from his day job of writing books, he will certainly have another career. It was a very commendable effort considering it was his first IWFS Festival, though one detected the admirable guiding hand of Stephanie Shepherd behind the scenes. Stephanie has been the EAZ Events Co-Ordinator for many years and this Festival and the immediately preceding Alsace Festival formed a happy and successful conclusion to this formidable roll, which she is now relinquishing.

We were blessed with two Italian speakers one of whom runs a wine investment business out of Amsterdam and the other was our esteemed Global Chair of the Society and Chair of the APZ, Michael Tamburri from Western Australia, enjoying his first overseas trip since becoming Chairman in the midst of Covid-19.

The intrepid party of 39 gathered on Monday 2nd May for our opening casual dinner at Villaggio Narrante about 108 kms south east of Turin. We were all accommodated in different hotels in the village which was founded in 1878 by Emanuele Alberto, Count of Mirafiore, son of the first King of Italy. Some may have thought the quantity of wine served at the opening

dinner was insufficient but it made for a sound sleep and by the end of the trip none were complaining about a lack of wine.

Two buses, which were with us throughout, greeted us at the civilised hour of 10am to take the group on our first visit the next morning. It was wonderful to see members from all over the world including some hardy warriors with remarkable grit and stamina who had come straight from 5 days in Alsace. We divided ourselves in an orderly fashion, donned our masks and set off

Our first visit was to Bra – with a capital B – the home of the global Slow Food movement. We enjoyed a visit to Giolito Formaggi, a cheese maker founded in 1920, which included a tour of the cheese cellars where some of the finest cheeses are aged to the sound of classical music. Certification of certain cheeses even takes place by tapping on the wheel rounds to listen to the correct sound – perhaps of music. The visit concluded with a rather rapid, but informative, tasting of seven cheeses with wine including medium Bra cheeses aged in hay from high and low pastures in order to impart different tastes and flavours.

Rather full and not a little lightheaded we stumbled through the streets of Bra to lunch at the famous Osteria del Boccondivino, the epicentre of the Slow Food movement. Thankfully it was a





reasonably light lunch. The restaurant may be the home of slow food but there was nothing slow about it, not even the service, though it was a little erratic. We consumed two wines of which there was an ample sufficiency. The white was served with the gnocchi pasta with cheese and the red with the rabbit with chips! An excellent chocolate cake with crème caramel and hazelnuts (in abundance in this part of Piedmont) was the dessert followed by a much needed hot espresso.

Onwards and upwards we travelled to the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Pollenzo where we toured the Banca del Vino enoteca and then attended a very interesting and well presented tasting of five wines matched with food. Our two guides and presenters were first class and the wines dangerously drinkable particularly the last wine, the 2017 Barolo Paolo Mansone.

Although you are recommended to consult the excellent André Simon lecture 2021 by Michael Garner, thoughtfully sent to us by Stephanie Shepherd in advance of the trip, a brief word about the great wines of the region:

The Barolo denomination comprises 11 different 'communes' with the central core being La Morre, Barolo, Castiglione Falletto, Monforte d'Alba and Serralunga d'Alba, where we were staying. The Barolo denomination comprises 2000 hectares covering a small range of hills to the south and west of Alba.

The Barbaresco denomination, lying on the outskirts of Alba itself, in contrast comprises around 700 hectares and consists of just four 'communes': Barbaresco itself, Neive and Treiso

together with a small part of Alba known as San Rocco Seno d'Elvio. Barbaresco must be aged for a period of 26 months of which nine are in wood and have a minimum alcohol content of 12.5% whereas Barolo has a minimum ABV of 13% and is aged for 38 months of which 18 are in wood. As one might expect, generally Barbaresco is marginally lighter and softer. Both are from the Nebbiolo grape.

The Nebbiolo grape has as much breadth and aroma as pinot noir and is as difficult to work with. It requires non-fertile soils and a relatively cool climate. It also buds early and can suffer from spring frosts and is a late ripener with harvests taking place mainly in October. The name Nebbiolo is taken from the Italian word for fog: La nebbia. It needs warm days and cool nights with sometimes a 20°C difference in temperature between day and night.

Finally, as Michael Garner said on the subject of taste: "In the glass a distinctive autumnal colour... more of a ruby garnet colour – deep rather than dark – with tints that shade from mauve to rusty brown."

At the conclusion of the wine tasting we went back to the hotel – some to rest such as your scribe and others to tour the historic Fontanafredda & Mirafiore winery. Reasonably well rested we then headed off by bus in the rain, to dinner at Bovio.

We stopped off at a brightly painted chapel, Capepella della Madonna delle Grazie, an apparently holy site with perhaps an unholy whimsical colour scheme. It acts also as a shelter to workers caught in the rain but, alas, it was shut when we visited. Lovely views of the valley would have been had if not for the rain.





An excellent meal was served at Bovio and at some point the rain relented so that we could enjoy the expansive vista as the sun set. The accompanying wines were fluently presented by Alessandro Locatelli, the general manager of the Rocche Costamagna winery in La Morra, one of the highest villages in the Barolo denomination. The standout wine was the Barolo Rocche Dellannunziata 2016, which was paired with a dish of tender goat with potatoes, carrots and green beans

The next morning we did wake up to some sunshine and were thus able to enjoy a photo opportunity at our first destination, Conterno Fantino in Monforte d'Alba, where we kicked off the day with three wines at 11:25am.

We travelled on to the traditional hill town of Verduno where we toured the tiny cellars dating from the 1500s at Castello Verduno, which is a small family winery. We visited the manor house and its garden overlooking some very small tortoises. Lunch was at the nearby Ca'del Re restaurant in the garden, which was lovely. Rain came at the end of our visit preventing a long stroll through the village of Barolo. A short walk in between showers was possible for some but no shopping as Wednesday is half day closing or for others a stop off for an extra Barolo or two.

Michael Tamburri kindly purchased a bottle of Barolo Massara 2015 from the winery for our table, which was a lovely wine, though curiously stoppered with a 2016 vintage cork!

The highlight of our visit to Barolo was the tasting at the Borgogno winery where a number of us bought some of the wine on offer in their very tempting and well stocked shop. We tasted three Borgogno Barolos from three different vineyards, all from the 2017 vintage. These wines will be extremely long living but could be enjoyed – just about – now.

Dinner that night was, at Guido in the village. It is said to be a 1-star Michelin restaurant but some had their doubts, as it was a rather disappointing meal with perhaps the Borgogno Barolo 'Liste' 2015, being the wine of the night paired with a nice mixed meat ravioli.

Day four dawned wet and overcast for a full day out with no return to the hotel to dry out or for rest and recuperation. First stop was in the village of Canelli at the historic Contratto cellar of La Spinetta. The Contratto dates from 1867 and is Italy's longest running sparkling wine producer made in the same way

as champagne. This is a very impressive winery housed in a monastery style building and our tour and tasting was professionally conducted. Few, however, thought what we drank was as good as champagne, particularly those who tried something different, namely the Asti Spumante 2018 – aptly named. The winery even makes a wine called 'For England Rosé' and we sampled the 2017 vintage. This wine was created in the 1920s for the English market, which demanded a drier wine, though your scribe found it too sweet. We did learn, however, that the master cellar master can in one hour turn 15,000 bottles of wine during the riddling process.

The rain was definitely a threat as we left and headed for the village of Barbaresco and the Marchesi di Gresy winery where we were shown round by Jeff, a displaced New Zealander, who arrived in Italy 32 years ago. We visited the central cellar in Martinenga, which has been the property of Marchesi di Gresy since 1797. Here they produce Barbaresco and Barolo from their four properties with the Martinenga's 11 hectares being considered one of the best Barbaresco vineyards. Somewhat surprisingly, though the first white wine in the region was produced in 1992, they produce a straight sauvignon blanc but, in spite of Jeff being a New Zealander, this wine, which we had as an apéritif, tasted nothing like an NZ Sav Blanc. Instead the 2020 Langhe Sauvignon was rather nice – rich yet fresh with 14% ABV.

We lunched at the excellent Osteria a Tre Stelle nearby on a simple five course menu accompanied by seven different wines! By now the rain was pouring down so what better than a long lunch as the afternoon walk round the village of Barbaresco was clearly out.

Lunch was excellent as were the wines accompanied by a short description of each wine by Jeff. He added the winery is worried about a lack of bottles for the next vintage due to a multitude of reasons but there were not many full bottles left when we eventually staggered up from the table. The highlight wines were perhaps the Gresy Chardonnay 2018 with its honeyed





taste, rich and creamy with a long finish and the Camp Gros Martinenga Barbaresco 2016, which was powerful yet youthful with a very intense flavour with floral aromas. Jeff commented that some say Barbaresco is female and Barolo is male.

With no afternoon walk we repaired to the winery and its shop. Those few who didn't sleep on the sofas purchased some more wine and then it was time for an early dinner. This had been

scheduled for 6pm but as we only finished lunch at 4.30pm dinner was pushed back an hour, which was just enough time for some to share a bottle of white wine in a wine bar.

Dinner was not a lively affair though it was held in the famous Antica Torre restaurant and comprised three courses with two wines, the 2017 Barbaresco from Produttori del Barbaresco being the best and served with rare roast beef.







The next day we were met by more rain, which was a pity because not only was it our last day but we were also to be in the city of Alba. A stroll around was not really likely in the heavy rain. However, we did have a very informative and amusing cellar visit and tasting at the famous Pio Cesare winery in the heart of the town.

We learnt that Pio Cesare is still a family business with the cellar located under the family's private apartments to which the family moved in 1881 and have been ever since. The cellars were fascinating and at the tasting of six wines we were told never to say either just a 'regular' Barolo or just a 'regular' Barbaresco but rather a 'classic' of each wine.

The winery gets its Nebbiolo grapes from 32 hectares of Barolo and 28 hectares of Barbaresco and produces 420,000 bottles each year releasing its wines after four years of ageing in the cellars. They have a museum wine library of each vintage back to the 1880s.

The standout wines at the tasting were the so called everyday drinking wine, being the Dolcetto d'Alba 2021 and the 2018 Barbaresco and 2018 Barolo both with an ABV of 14.5%. Your scribe preferred the Barolo to the Barbaresco and also indeed the final wine, which was a 2018 Barolo 'Mosconi' – quite excellent with firm, fresh, soft tannins and a long sweet finish. Very satisfying now but it will have a long life.

Next it was lunch and what a lunch! We braved the rain and headed on foot to L'inedito Vigin Mudest, which is highly recommended. This was an excellent four course lunch with the food paired very well with the wines, all of which were from Pio

Cesare. The dessert, having been bought in, was disappointing. Of the wines perhaps the best was the Pio Cesare Barolo 'Pio' 2018 in magnum enjoyed with confit of guinea fowl.

How to top that lunch to end the trip was going to be a challenge but first a rest in the hotel and then a visit to the eleventh century Castillo di Grinzane Cavour. Once those with high heels had made it up to the castle over the cobbles the tour of the castle commenced where we were informed that the Great Hall was the home of the Order of the Truffle Knights since 1957 and where the annual truffle auctions have been held.

Dinner was at Restaurant Marc Lanteri, quite rightly a 1-star Michelin restaurant. Excellent service of six wines and five courses with very good attention to detail shown. The asparagus risotto and the rack of lamb dishes being superb, with the best wine and food match being the Curto Barolo 'La Foia' 2016 with the lamb.

Speeches from Global Chair, Michael Tamburri, and EAZ Chair, John Nicolas, with suitable and very appropriate presentations to Phillip Kim and Stephanie Shepherd concluded a lovely evening and the trip. If there was one criticism, apart from the unavoidable weather, it would be that a menu of the food and wine should really accompany each meal.

However, overall this was a very enjoyable and informative tour and the organisers and us of course, venturing out after the pandemic, are to be commended. Old friends were greeted again, new ones made and we surely look forward to being together on another successful IWFS trip.



# REVIEW: THE WINE LOVER'S DAUGHTER

by *Helen Mills*

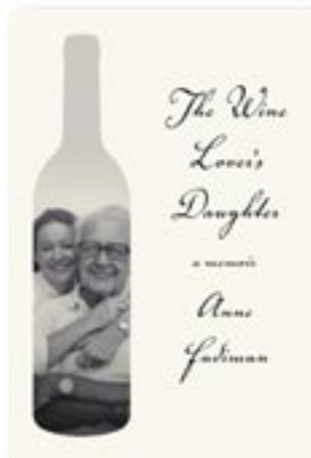
## The Wine-lovers Daughter

by Anne Fadiman

originally published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017, in the United States

I read it here in a Slightly Foxed Edition in 2021. Slightly Foxed is a publishing company to which I subscribe for interesting and sometimes out of date books.

The original title of this book was to be 'The Oenophile's Daughter' but after reflection it was decided that a) nobody would understand it and b) neither would they be able to spell or pronounce it, so it became the title as above.



It really is the story of the father Clifton 'Kip' Fadiman – writer, broadcaster, book reviewer and wine connoisseur. Anne writes lovingly about his life and his wine from his first sip of Graves in France in 1927 to his prestigious 80th birthday celebrations. At one of these latter dinners there was a Premier Cru Bordeaux of the same age!

His appreciation of wines was confined to Europe and most predominately France. His cellar book which she owned was prestigious. In a folder she found: 'Wine Memorabilia' an article called 'Remembrance of Drinks Past' and it seemed 'to glow with joy, as if the memory of my father's pleasure was so strong as to render it faintly radioactive'.

This book has only just become available in the UK. I am presuming that our IWFS friends will have already perused it, indeed some of them might easily have met him. I hope you will enjoy this book as much as I have.

# REVIEW: WHISKY – THE FINAL EDITION

by *Peter McGahey*

## Whisky – The Final Edition

by Ulf Buxrud

Holm & Holm Books, 2022, Sweden

Ulf Buxrud was born in Norway in 1942 and is now legendary in the circles of whisky enthusiasts, but perhaps best known for the two books he authored, *Rare Malts, Facts Figures and Taste* and *Japanese Whisky, Facts Figures and Taste*.

His greatest contribution to the industry was probably as an educator. Over 15 years he donated his time to leading structured whisky tastings in Sweden.

Relaxing now, he and his family split their time between their home in Limhamn in Sweden and their second home on Marco Island Florida.

This book, *Whisky – The Final Edition*, appraises the history and development of Japanese Whisky from its dawning in seventeenth century, when the Akuto family were brewers of Sake, to the now extensive and sophisticated

whisky distilleries in the towns of Chichibu and Hanyu near Tokyo. Ichiro Akuto-san now represents the family's 21st generation in the industry.

The narrative which combines anecdotes, humour and facts concentrates on the development of an iconic collection of single malt whiskies, the Playing Card Series, characterised by the distinctive playing card theme of the labels. Highly informative and presented in a readily assimilated style the narrative is supported by tasting notes and technical data of each example in the series.





## IWFS AWARDS

Since 1st January the following Awards have been presented

To Berkshire Branch members on 18th March 2022:

- **Colin Mair**, an Exceptional Service Diploma and Medallion for all his work for the Berkshire Branch as a member, a Committee Member and also as Chairman.
- **John Farren**, a 10 year Exceptional Service Diploma and Medallion for his work on the Branch Committee.
- **David Kirk**, a 25 year Exceptional Long Service Diploma for his dedicated membership of the Branch.
- **Ros Kirk**, a 25 year Exceptional Long Service Diploma for her dedicated membership of the Branch.



On 28th April 2022 at The EAZ Alsace Festival 2022 to:

- **David Ling**, an EAZ Exceptional Service Diploma for all his help to the EAZ and organising the local arrangements for the EAZ Alsace Festival 2022.

David was the Export director for 43 years at Hugel & Fils, French wine producer established in Riquewihr, Alsace, before he retired. He is the immediate past Grand Maître of the Confrérie Saint-Etienne d'Alsace and the first foreign person to hold this post.

He also is one of the professional consultants to the IWFS Wine Committee and has liaised with the EAZ on many occasions over the years to give help and advice.

On 6th May 2022 at the final Dinner of the EAZ Piedmont Festival 2022:

- **Phillip Kim** of the London Branch An Exceptional Service Diploma and Medallion for organising the local arrangements for the Piedmont Festival 2022 (I think that it was also his idea to have a Festival in Piedmont)
- **John Nicholas**, a Silver AS Medal.

On 12th May 2022, A Restaurant Award to The Chef de Cuisine, **Brian Spark** and the Restaurant Manager **Michael Spencer** of **The Midland Hotel, Manchester**, for an outstanding lunch arranged for the Manchester Branch on Saturday 26th March 2022.

On 27th May 2022 to Bristol & Bath members:

- **Janet Bagot** for all her work for the Bristol & Bath Branch as a member, a Committee member, Branch Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Web Master, and assistance at the 2018 Members' Forum.
- **Kathleen Ebenezer**, a 10-year Exceptional Service Diploma and Medallion for her work on the Branch Committee.



## THE MERSEYSIDE & MID CHESHIRE EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The Merseyside and Mid Cheshire Branch have presented three Excellence Awards and approved a fourth ready for presentation to the Grosvenor shortly.

**Buckley's Restaurant**, part of the Warrington and Vale Royal College, was the first and they put the award on their website and appreciated the recognition for their students.



**The Yellow Broom**, in Cheshire, provided exceptional food and service and was unanimously approved by the attendees who were from the Herefordshire and Monmouthshire and Manchester branches as well as MMC.

**The Grosvenor Hotel** in Chester provided a memorable Christmas 2021 event in spite of access difficulties due to Christmas market road closures. Members from Manchester and the Blackpool and Fylde branches attended. A full awards certificate as well as the Excellence Award was suggested and this will also be put in motion.

**The Spirit Restaurant** in Warrington had the Award presented on 24th March by Hilary Rylands our secretary (pictured right). The two Chefs were noted for their excellent dishes.



## THE BATH & BRISTOL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Bath & Bristol Branch is pleased to announce that they have made the first Excellence Award in the South West to **The Carpenters Arms**, Stanton Wick.

It is a traditional, family-run country pub with which the branch has had a great relationship for many years. The team has consistently provided the members with good food and wine but it is the warmth of their welcome and their unfailing helpfulness which sets them apart from so many venues.

Despite the many pressures on hospitality arising from the 'double whammy' of Covid and Brexit, and the fact that like many other venues they are short of staff, they have managed to maintain their high standards. Congratulations to all the worthy recipients. We look forward to reporting on more in the future.

*Leonie Allday*







## Berkshire

### AGM AND TASTING EVENT

Doug and Suzie Miles are long-term Members of the Berkshire Branch and have built up a very impressive cellar focusing on Clarets from 2nd growth producers. Doug contracted Motor Neurone Disease a few years ago and recently asked for a little help from branch members to access and organise his cellar. Out of this process, Doug very kindly offered a selection of excellent wines from his cellar to form the basis for a Branch Tasting event. The Committee suggested that this be held on the same evening as our AGM on Friday 18th March which attracted a full house of 37 attendees.

We were very pleased to welcome back Charlotte Parratt to cater for this event. Charlotte, whilst a branch member, was also for many years our chef, preparing our supper at tasting events. The menu she devised for this very special occasion fitted well with the wines and was served course by course throughout the evening.

The event was also used to raise funds for the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA). The event was priced to include an initial sum but many members also took the option of adding their own contribution. The event raised more than £700 for the MNDA.

On the evening the wines were presented by members Ian Roe, Chris Gutch and Colin Mair as Doug's condition meant that he was unable to be with us. A laptop was set up to use Zoom linked to Doug's mobile phone so that he could see and hear the presenter and participate in the meeting.

The 2015 Erdener Herzlei Riesling Spätlese from the Mosel estate of Dr Hermann was a classic medium Riesling from what

had been described as "the vintage of the century" by Jancis Robinson: perfect growing conditions with a summer of warm dry weather and rain falling at the ideal time. The old vines are ungrafted and it has been variously described as "lush and balanced", "unctuously honeyed", and estimated to be drinking for at least another twenty years.

Apart from being from the same grape variety, the second white was different in many ways. The Oberhäuser Leistenberg Kabinett 2001 from the Dönnhoff estate in the Nahe was lighter-bodied and more mineral, but with good fruit (peach? stone fruit?) and a greater freshness despite its twenty years of age and only the merest hint of petrol notes on the palate. Critical comments from five years ago suggesting that it may have reached its peak by then have proved unfounded and the wine was still beautifully drinkable; fresh and tasty fruit with very good balance and length.

Clos du Clocher was founded in 1924 by Jean Baptiste Audy who started out with a small plot of vines near the church of Pomerol, now three plots, totalling 4.6 hectares. Vinification still takes place in cement tanks and the wine undergoes malolactic fermentation in the barrel. Aged in about 60% new, French oak barrels for between 16 and 20 months delivering a wine from 2009 which has a good nose; hint of liquorice; distinct acid and some tannin. It would last a few more years.

The 60 hectare Bordeaux vineyard of Château Batailley is planted to 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot in the appellation of Pauillac. Vinification takes place in a total of 60, temperature-controlled stainless steel vats that vary in size from 110 hectolitres to 130



hectolitres. On average, the wine is aged in 55% new, French oak barrels for between 16 to 18 months, depending on the vintage. 2003 was a very strange vintage; it was extremely hot and many vineyards suffered from lack of water. However, Bataille's 2003 is generally reckoned to have surpassed all its earlier and many more recent vintages. One of the evening's favourites, the 2003 wine was found to have luscious depth of fruit on nose and palate with soft tannin.

Château Cissac in Haut-Medoc has the reputation of producing reliable quality wines. Vinification takes place in large, temperature-controlled, stainless steel vats and large wood vats. Malolactic fermentation takes place in tanks and the wine is aged in 30% new, French oak barrels for up to 18 months before bottling. The cépage varies between vintages, the Cabernet Sauvignon varies between 58% and 75%, the Merlot from 35% to 20% and the Petit Verdot from 8% to 5%. Members found the 1995 wine had high levels of acid, with bright fruit, light tannin and fair depth and length.

Château Ducru-Beaucaillou was the most famous of the wines tasted. It is a 2nd growth in the classification of 1855, just one rung below the First Growths. The Ducru-Beaucaillou is rated 98+ points by Parker and the Lafite 99 points – scores out of 100 points, which represents perfection! However the 1988 vintage is not regarded as being one of its greatest.

To produce the wine the grapes are allowed to macerate for close to seven days. Vinification takes place in stainless steel vats of various sizes allowing for a plot by plot vinification. The entire process takes about two weeks, with the frequency of pumping over and exact temperature tailored to each individual vat. Malolactic fermentation takes place in concrete vats. The wine of Château Ducru-Beaucaillou is aged in 75% to 90% new, French oak barrels for between 18 and 20 months. The amount of time and new oak varies depending on the vintage. Members commented: "Wonderful, very good fruit, with some complexity. Lovely balance and long."

The two sweet wines, whilst very different, were served together along with the dessert. Château de Rayne Vigneau is a large (84ha) property in Sauternes, with soil and local climate regarded as the finest after d'Yquem. Château de Rayne Vigneau is made from 74% Sémillon, 24% Sauvignon Blanc and 2% Muscadelle and is a true benchmark, with an intensely fresh and long style. "The 2001 has produced a truly exceptional crop of hedonistic Sauternes, equalling and even surpassing the greatest vintages of the last 50 years like 1990, 1988, 1976 and

1967. Some owners and critics are heralding it as the finest vintage ever," say Berry Bros. "Light nose at first, but gradually getting richer. Luscious fruit. Gorgeous," say the Berkshire Branch of the 2001.

Baumard is situated in Rochefort-sur-Loire, just south of the river opposite Savennières. The domaine has been a family property since 1634. Jean Baumard developed it in the 1950s, and his son Florent has ensured that today it is considered one of the best wine producers in the Loire valley. The domaine works organically, though without certification. Grapes are hand-picked, with selection of the best bunches; Chenin Blanc ripens unevenly, and on the same bunch there may be grapes of different maturity. Pressing aims at not extracting too much tannin and eliminating any extraneous matter. At no point is the juice allowed contact with wood. Florent is one of the few winemakers in France to insist on screw-top closure.

The Clos de Sainte Catherine is from the Coteaux du Layon and will taste dry or, at most, demi-sec. After 20 years or more in bottle the sweetness emerges, to produce a dessert wine with honey-like fruit and a balance of acid and sugar that is sweet but not cloying. Members found that the 2004 showed distinct acid, but nice fruit and balance, quite the opposite of cloying.

The branch members would like to thank Doug and Suzie for allowing us the opportunity to experience such a range of great and interesting wines. When partnered with Charlotte's carefully chosen and prepared supper, this made for a memorable evening, one which will not be readily equalled.

### Charlotte's Supper

Canapés consisted of crab in filo baskets, duck liver and quail egg croutons, goats cheese and tomato pastry, melon with Parma ham, asparagus and Hollandaise sauce.

The main dish was slow roast shoulder of lamb with Madeira jus with pea and mint pesto accompanied by dauphinoise potatoes, cavolo nero, baby carrots and green beans.

Desert was plum frangipani tart and crème fraîche rounded off with dark chocolate truffles and passion fruit curd raspberries.

The excellent wines were topped and tailed by an apéritif of Von Buhl Riesling Sekt Brut 2017 from Laithwaites and a supper wine of Château Pey La Tour Reserve 2018, from The Wine Society.

*Chris Graham*





## *Blackpool* **AGM AND TASTING EVENT**

To demonstrate our commitment to training the next generation of hospitality staff we organised a meal for 12 members at Level 6, Blackpool & Fylde College, in March.

Although there are always details that can be improved, we were impressed by the standards achieved. More members wished to attend but we were limited to one large table; it really is that popular! And when we learned that a three course meal cost less than £12, I know we will be back.

Photos show members selecting from the menu and my main dish, Braised Lamb served with champ mash, crispy shallots, and crushed minted peas.

*Ron Barker*



## Herefordshire & Monmouthshire LUNCH AT SEVERN & WYE SMOKERY



To recognise and celebrate our branch members renewal of their subscriptions for 2022, we held our first event of the year in February and booked lunch at the Severn & Wye Smokery in Westbury on Severn, Gloucestershire. The venue is easily

accessible from the Herefordshire & Monmouthshire branch area and also for Bath & Bristol members. An excellent response from both areas gave us a party of 27, including several first time guests whom we hope will become members. The Smokery specialises in serving fish – some sourced locally – and augments the restaurant menu with a range of smoked meats and cheeses.

Severn & Wye has developed over the years from a simple A48 roadside outlet with a large board on the kerb offering TROUT to passing motorists into a venue with a restaurant, a café and shop offering a wide range of delicatessen products alongside fresh and smoked fish and meats, locally prepared pies, wines and locally produced alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. The on-site smoke-house prepares products for the restaurant and shop.

Jerome, the maître d' hotel, is French with perfect English and an accent that softened the hearts of several ladies present. He presided over the meal with calm efficiency and time passed unnoticed until we realised it was dusk!

The wines recommended by Jerome to accompany the various food choices were the 'house' selection: red and white. Both were well received and realistically priced at £18.50.

The menu which Jerome created for us was extensive and to aid service we had pre-ordered. The main menu changes with the seasons and at all times an 'example' menu is available on their website at [www.severnandwye.co.uk](http://www.severnandwye.co.uk).

Staff and guests observed social distancing recommendations and we were seated and served very comfortably – a bonus having plenty of elbow room – may that continue!

As is the custom of the branch, this first event of the year was supported, modestly, from branch funds.

*Sue Smith*





## Herefordshire & Monmouthshire LUNCH AT RESTAURANT 1861

If travelling the gloriously swooping road from Abergavenny to Ross you will round a bend (from either direction) and suddenly face the striking black and white and stone building formerly The Three Salmons, a typically struggling country pub, but now the thriving Restaurant 1861 which stands alongside the newly constructed and architecturally sympathetic accommodation annexe. The original building is dated, fairly obviously, 1861.

Arrival here always sets expectations very high; it is the creation of its young resident family Kate and Simon King who fell for the attractions of the building in 2007 and have worked hard for the last fifteen years to achieve their ambition of establishing a serious restaurant in outstanding countryside. For good reason it is a favourite of the Herefordshire and Monmouthshire branch of the IWFS and it is all the more praiseworthy for being in an area with no shortage of competition. Nothing has changed since our last visit (well, maybe the menu!) with the ever cheerful and efficient Kate as front-of-house and Simon working his magic in the kitchen. Help is sometimes to hand but on this day we had Kate and Simon to ourselves.

It was April Fool's Day when thirteen H&M branch members drove to Restaurant 1861 on a beautiful sunny but chilly spring day. Unfortunately we were a few members short due to the wretched Covid and other maladies. Kate greeted us at the door with a welcoming glass of Pinot Grigio Rosé Spumante Vetrano, and acquaintanceships were renewed in the warm comfort of the dining-room. We had pre-ordered from a three course menu giving three options for each course: broccoli soup with Stilton mousse, wild garlic risotto or salad of cheese beignets with tomato relish (pictured below left); ballotine of chicken with sage cream, a trio of fish with parsley sauce (pictured below right) or a blanquette of spring vegetables with little gem lettuce and mint; spiced apple fritters, rhubarb syllabub or stem ginger floating island. Wines were Freedom



Cross Chenin Blanc and Otis Tarda Rioja which seemed to cover our respective tastes.

Towards the conclusion of the meal our branch chairman Nigel Williams stood to say a few words of appreciation of our hosts. The modest Simon was prised out of his kitchen to join Kate in receiving the Society's Certificate of Excellence (pictured above) which it is hoped will be displayed alongside other signs showing awards that the couple have received over their years of service to the people of Monmouthshire and beyond.

Conversation continued long after we should have left the couple to clear away ready for the evening but this was reflective of a time well spent.

*Julian Trump*



## Herefordshire & Monmouthshire

### A DINNER AND TASTING AT TANNERS, SHREWSBURY



On the 5th May 2022, our members attended a private dinner and wine tasting at Tanners in their very old and beamed listed building at Wyle Cop, Shrewsbury. We were joined and entertained by Robert Boutflower and Alix Chidley-Uttley of Tanners, who acted as our hosts, guides and tutors.

The evening began with an apéritif and canapés served on the ground floor in a room adjacent to part of the old cellars and lined with very old ledgers and bottles, including an old and huge champagne bottle too fragile to fill. The atmosphere was redolent of wine and old wood, unnoticed by our hosts who experience it daily but evoking for us familiar, perhaps forgotten, memories of times past.

The apéritif was Tanners Extra Reserve Special Brut Champagne with a high content of pinot noir and pinot meunier; made with a proportion of reserve wines in the manner of a vintage champagne, which was greatly appreciated for its fuller style and a very good start to the evening.



We enjoyed looking round the storage cellars, notable for two very large old wooden casks, and then went up an old flight of stairs to the beamed dining room.

The dinner menu had been arranged beforehand, with a choice of three dishes for each course and two wines were served for tasting and drinking with each course. Robert Boutflower and Alix Chidley-Uttley spoke about each wine, guiding us to appreciate what we were drinking. Some of the wines were unfamiliar to many of us, which led on to questions, comments and then general discussion as the evening progressed in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

#### The menu choices and wines for the first course were:

- Smoked mackerel pâté with ciabatta toast.
- Melon, Parma ham and dolcelatte skewers with balsamic glaze.
- Sesame, halloumi and courgette fritters with honey and Chilli dressing.

#### Wines:

- Crémant de Bourgogne Brut, Cave de Viré
- Dopff & Irion Pinot Gris, Cuvée René Dopff, Alsace 2020

#### The main course and wines:

- Chicken, brie and spinach roulade with prosecco sauce
- Pepper crusted fillet steak; creamy peppercorn sauce
- Cod with chorizo crumb and spicy tomatoes



#### Wines:

- Château Lespault-Martillac Blanc, Pessac-Léognan 2018
- Barolo, Cannubi, Fratelli Serio e Battista Borgogno 2017

Some members commented upon the choice of the white Graves and it was particularly interesting to try wines served with the first and main courses which many of us would not normally have thought of choosing. The writer found that the Graves complemented his choice of chicken, brie and spinach roulade well.

#### The puddings, cheese and wines:

- Lemon Tart, Fresh Berries and Cream
- Sea Salted Chocolate and Pecan Tart
- Mango and Passionfruit Mousse
- Cheese Board

#### Wines:

- Noval 20 Year Old Tawny Port
- Coteaux du Layon, Saint-Aubin, Domaine des Forges 2019

Book-ended by the Extra Reserve Special, Brut Champagne at the start and the Coteaux du Layon and Noval 20 Year Tawny to finish, the dinner was deemed to be a most enjoyable and informative evening and ended with our thanks to Robert and Alix for a memorable occasion. The next morning many of us took the opportunity to visit the treasure trove of wine which is the Tanners Cellar Shop.

*Nigel Williams*





## Manchester

### LUNCH AT THE WILD GOOSE



In February 2022 Manchester members and guests gathered at the Wild Goose Restaurant in Altrincham as storms ravaged Great Britain. We were greeted by a welcome glass of Bouvet Saumur Rosé Brut, which was fresh, creamy and floral. The wine flowed freely as members chatted, pleased to be warm and safe from the gale outside.

Once seated, Chair Ronnie Costello welcomed everyone, especially four new members and guests. Artisan breads, flavoured butter and olives were already on the tables for us to enjoy. Along came French onion soup with a Gruyère crouton which was delicious with the perfect balance of sweet and sharp enjoyed by all. This was served with L'Entente Bio Chardonnay Viognier dry and slightly spicy.

Our main course was a traditional coq au vin with pommes purée, a trip down memory lane nonetheless much enjoyed L'Entente Organic Merlot Cabernet accompanied it which was fresh and fruity.

Tart au Citron with raspberry coulis was our pudding which had short, crisp pastry with a creamy tart lemon packed filling, superb.







An informal, relaxed afternoon was had by all. Chef Lee, Matt, Jermaine and all the team who did a sterling job were thanked by the Chair.

A few days later they were presented with an Excellence Award which they were delighted with.

*Ronnie Costello*





## Manchester

### LUNCH AND AGM AT THE MIDLAND HOTEL

The The Midland Hotel, one of the finest buildings in Manchester, opened 118 years ago. It was once a British Transport Hotel and (British Rail) Central Station was across the road (now an Exhibition Hall). In recent times the bar area has been refurbished and it's a delight to drink there.

The reception on 26th March 2022 was at midday, when an apéritif was served, Devaux Oeil de Perdrix Rosé Champagne NV. On the nose there were hints of red fruits, with a good mousse and it finished well – a very pleasant wine and ideal for the occasion.

The AGM followed, attended by 57 people (three members unfortunately had Covid) in the Derby Suite. The meeting lasted 40 minutes.

Then lunch was served.

For the starter we had Salmon Ravioli and butter poached Langoustines on crushed peas in a Lobster bisque. This was an excellent tasty dish and judging from comments made, everybody had enjoyed it. It was paired with a Chablis from Domaine Colombier; the two went very well together.

The main course was Roast Fillet of Limousin Beef, with ceps, nettle purée, roasted artichokes, and bone marrow jus. The meat was perfectly cooked; it was truly amazing how the chef could cook so many fillets to perfection. Needless to say everybody was totally enthused by it.

It was paired with a 2016 Les Bretèches from Château Kefraya in Lebanon. A lovely red wine, which complemented both the main course and also the cheese course of Tunworth Cheese from Leicestershire.

The dessert consisted of Vanilla Pannacotta with cherry compote, and cherry garnish. I do not have desserts myself but my informant said it was lovely and light and most pleasurable. My fruit salad was delightful.

Chef, Brian Spark, and his team put on one of the best meals we have had in a long time, it was truly memorable.

Michael Spencer and his team did a great job with the wine and food service. All in all a great day out.

*Bob Lloyd*





## Manchester

### A TASTING OF UNUSUAL GRAPE VARIETIES

On 27th April 2022, Matt Whitehouse from Majestic in Hale kindly joined us to lead us through a tasting of six unusual grape varieties. Matt had really done his homework and explained to us where each wine came from and how the wine was produced.

We started with a Lugana from Lake Garda, Nunzio Ghiraldi, and this was a lovely wine, similar in style to a Chablis. There was plenty of nose and on tasting tropical fruits were dancing in the minerality. This was a delightful and elegant wine.

We then moved onto a wine from Savoie made from the local Jacquère grape, Apremont. This didn't have much on the nose and was quite a delicate wine. It didn't have the structure of the Lugana and whilst we appreciated the skill and effort required to make wine at altitude, it wasn't a memorable wine.

Our final white was Tahbilk, a Marsanne from Australia. This had a powerful almond nose and some citrus came through on tasting. It ages well and develops a honeyed character after a decade or so.

Onto the reds and we started with Bolney Estate pinot noir from Sussex. Most English pinot noir goes into sparkling wine and, unfortunately, we could understand why having tasted this wine. It was thin and didn't have the perfume and fruit we are used to with our Burgundies. An interesting academic exercise nonetheless!

Our next red came from Sicily and was a blend of two unusual grape varieties, Frappato and Nerello Mascalese. This is grown at altitude near the sea and was light and fruity. Fans of Beaujolais would love this one.



Our final wine was from the Xinomavro grape of Greece. This was a wine with some complexity and body. It paired very nicely with our tender lamb hotpot and cheese selection. It is excellent value at £11.99 on the 'mix six' deal and will certainly be appearing in my cellar in future!

Matt was a very engaging teacher and we thoroughly enjoyed our informative tour of these wines. It was a lovely evening and thanks to Worsley Golf Club for hosting us.

*Nicola McLoughlin*



## *Vale Royal* **INAUGURAL DINNER**

The 16th February 2022 saw the Inaugural Dinner of Vale Royal Branch at La Boheme, Lymm, Cheshire. With Olivier Troalen as head chef and his wife Adele running front-of-house, this family-owned restaurant breathes a strong French influence throughout. Olivier created the four-course menu especially for the event including options for starters and main courses; branch founder member Chris Pacey provided wines to match.

It was Alison Graham, whose husband Steve is Treasurer for EAZ, who first had the idea of forming a new IWFS branch, based at Vale Royal in Cheshire. Ali wanted to create an alternative group in the region, offering a small but perfectly-formed range of events throughout the year. We were delighted that both current Chairman John Nicholas, and past Chairman Ian Nicol, were in attendance with their wives. John presented Ali with the Provisional Charter and founder members with their medallions.

The warm and friendly atmosphere of the venue and the group was matched by the excellent fare – exactly reflecting Ali's intention. Everyone enjoyed the excellent Grand Cru Louis Tollef Rosé and amuses-bouches before we sat down to the starters. A crispy spring roll contrasted with the warm creamy goats cheese parcels, with the delicate mushroom mousse set against the sweetness of the purée. The seabass offered a fresh take on bouillabaisse, the fish served with the vegetables, rouille and croutons before the pouring of the soup, which added surprising depth. The crispness of the perfectly-cooked pork belly and black-pudding croquette was complemented by the richness of the remoulade. Chris's comments on the

accompanying Sancerre reflected the pleasure taken by diners in this excellent wine of unsurprisingly limited availability.

The lamb rump was well cooked and complemented by the beans and vegetables, although it may have benefited from additional greenery. The salmon was light with a beautifully balanced chowder, soft mussels, colourful vegetables and creamy mash. The combination of vegetables, cream cheese and hazelnuts with the pithivier made for a particularly tasty dish; the pastry was light and airy, the sauce delicately flavoured. The smooth Médoc was an especially good accompaniment to the lamb and pithivier dishes.

The tarte au citron was a sensible choice for a light and crowd-pleasing conclusion to this excellent meal and had two of the party united in a nostalgic fraternal eulogy on their mother's lemon meringue pie. The sweetness of the Gewürztraminer was a particularly good accompaniment for the raspberry sorbet served with the tarte.

Lastly, we were treated to a range of excellent cheeses with tawny port – although their reception was inevitably muted due to most diners being well beyond the point of satiation by this stage of the proceedings.

This thoroughly enjoyable evening marked the beginning of something new for the IWFS and for diners whose freedom to enjoy such events has been sadly curtailed for so long. We all look forward to the next event.

*Judith Graham*







*International Wine & Food Society, IWFS Americas Inc.*

*Presents*  
*Great Weekend in Washington, D.C.*

**OCTOBER 12-15, 2022**



IWFS Americas Inc. invites you to join members from the US and around the world for four days of culture, history and exceptional cuisine. Our next Great Weekend takes us to the Nation's Capital, Washington, D.C. We will be staying at the Five-Star, historic Willard Hotel, enjoying some of the major sites, as well as dining at the finest restaurants in D.C. Full details and registration can be found on [www.iwfs.org](http://www.iwfs.org) Early registration is recommended – high demand is anticipated

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### UK Berkshire

22nd July 2022

Join us for a luncheon at The Crooked Billet, Stoke Row. Contact: Colin Mair at [colin.mair@ntlworld.com](mailto:colin.mair@ntlworld.com)

### UK Manchester

23rd July 2022

Summer Lunch at The Black Friar, Salford, at midday. The event will start with a glass of fizz or a gin cocktail in the garden and followed by a three course lunch. Contact: Nicola McLoughlin at [mcloughlins@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mcloughlins@yahoo.co.uk)

### UK West Yorkshire

7th August 2022

Tour of Dunesforde Vineyard, York. Join us for a personal guided tour of the vineyard, followed by lunch and a tutored tasting of their award winning wines. Contact: Sue Timme at [suetimme@gmail.com](mailto:suetimme@gmail.com)

### UK Blackpool & Fylde Coast

8th August 2022

We welcome back Jon Atkinson from Wintime in Liverpool (part of European Wine Growers Association) to share his favourite wines. Venue: Aysgarth Court, Blackpool. Details from Ron Barker at [ronbarker@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ronbarker@hotmail.co.uk)

### UK Berkshire

12th August 2022

Tasting of wines from the branch cellar at Harrow and Hope, Marlow. Contact: Colin Mair at [colin.mair@ntlworld.com](mailto:colin.mair@ntlworld.com)

### UK Surrey Hills

14th August 2022

The 31st Edition of Starters & Puds. For further details contact: Susie Punch at [kipnsue@btinternet.com](mailto:kipnsue@btinternet.com)

### UK Blackpool & Fylde Coast

5th September 2022

Matching wines to Lancashire Pies. We will serve a Lancashire Butter Pie, a Pork Pie (served warm in the Lancashire way) and a Fruit Pie with wines to match. Details from Ron Barker at [ronbarker@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ronbarker@hotmail.co.uk)

### UK Merseyside & Mid Cheshire

7th September 2022

12-30 for 1pm, Lebanese Lunch at DeFine Restaurant Cuddington, CW8 2NH. Contact Hilary Rylands at 01928 712123 or 0780 3757324



### UK Merseyside & Mid Cheshire

21st and 22nd October 2022

Great Weekend at Tyn y Cornel Hotel, Tal-y-llyn, Tywyn LL36 9 AJ. Please book directly with the Hotel: phone 01654 782282, website [www.tynycornel.com](http://www.tynycornel.com), email [enquiries@tynycornel.com](mailto:enquiries@tynycornel.com)

*Looking ahead to EAZ and other Zone festivals:*

### UK EA Ltd AGM Torbay

22nd to 24th September 2022

There has been a change in the plans for this year's AGM and Member Forum. We are now heading to the south coast for this event. The AGM and ABRM will be held on the 24th September. Keep this weekend clear in your diary. Details will follow.

### SINGAPORE

16th to 18th September 2022

Join this APZ festival and AGM (which has had to rescheduled) to visit this delightful island country to enjoy its culinary delights and explore its beauty including the Singapore Botanic Gardens – which has been awarded a UNESCO Heritage Site. Details to be released as available.

### USA Washington DC

12th to 15th October 2022

The Americas next Great Weekend takes you to the Nation's Capital. October is a perfect time to visit, when the weather is wonderful and the tourists have mostly gone. Guests will be staying at the Five-Star historic Willard Hotel, enjoying some of the major sites, as well as dining at the finest restaurants in DC.

### USA Willamette Valley, Oregon

2nd to 6th May 2023

Join the Americas for a wonderful tour of this beautiful wine region, visiting some of the top wineries and enjoying some of culinary delights of the region. Details to follow but in the meantime put the dates in your diary.

### SPAIN Barcelona and Catalunya

23rd to 27th May 2023

A delightful festival is being organised by the EAZ's local members. Starting in Barcelona you will then be taken to the Catalunya countryside to explore this 'land of castles' visiting vineyards and enjoying some of the best restaurants.