

"It would have been splendid...  
if the wine had been as cold as the soup,  
the beef as rare as the service,  
the brandy as old as the fish,  
and the maid as willing as  
the duchess."

*Winston Churchill, when asked about dinner,  
Quoted in The Observer*

## How much can we drink?

First it was the French paradox, which suggested that French people lived longer because they drank more wine. Then came the Copenhagen study, which found that people drinking three to five glasses of wine a day had only 51% of the risk of dying prematurely experienced by people who drank no wine at all. As recently as last year, you reported that the Government was thinking of raising the "safe drinking limits" recommended to the public to bring the UK more into line with countries such as France and Italy.



But now you report that "cutting average daily intake to the equivalent of half a small glass of wine would prevent almost 4,600 premature deaths a year in England alone, according to a study carried out by University College London".

How could so many people have got it so wrong for so long? And why are the French still living longer than we are?

*David Hewitt, London*

*Letter to The Independent reproduced in The Week.*

## Peel off the Weight

An apple a day may keep the doctor away however it could also keep you slim but you must eat the peel. Mice fed fatty food laced with ursolic acid, the chemical responsible for the apple skin's waxy sheen, ate more but put on less weight than those eating the same food without the chemical. Ursolic acid also seemed to keep blood-sugar levels in check and stop the liver becoming clogged up with fat, reports the scientific journal 'PLoS ONE'. The study showed ursolic acid, which is also found in cranberries and prunes, could boost muscle and 'brown' fat, a calorie-hungry type of fat common in babies. Dr Christopher Adams of the University of Iowa said: 'Since muscle is very good at burning calories, the increased muscle in the ursolic acid-treated mice might be sufficient to explain how ursolic acid reduces obesity. We were surprised to find ursolic acid also increased brown fat, a fantastic calorie burner.' Dr Adams is now working to find out if apple peel is as good for people as it is for mice.



## Battle of the Brickets

Two ice cream sellers attacked each other in a Blackburn street in a row over cut-price cones. Mr Yummy smashed Mr Whippy's window with a tyre lever; he responded by ramming his rival's van. "Mr Yummy is muscling in on my patch," complained Whippy.

*THE WEEK 16 June 2012*

## Getting Fruity

Forget the oysters if you are looking for an aphrodisiac try pomegranates. In a study carried out in Edinburgh people who drank a daily glass of pure juice for a fortnight experienced a 'significant' rise in testosterone levels. A spokesman said, 'The juice not only gives a hormone boost in both males and females but it can also help raise mood and increase memory'. You may even remember who you were with last night!



## It is Time for Action

With modern fishing technology no ocean shallower than 3,000ft is safe from our fishing fleets and in some regions waters are fished down to 10,000ft. In the past 30 years the oceans have lost 75% of their megafauna - whales, sharks, rays and dolphins and populations of some fish, such as skate, are down as much as 99% in northern Europe. The total haul of our fishermen today is just 6% of that caught by their forefathers in sailing boats in the 19th century. These statistics are from a major new book by Professor Callum Roberts of the University of York. He says it is not only overfishing that is destroying marine life, rising pollution, and the acidification of the seas caused by CO2 emissions are also to blame. We now face a catastrophe of epic proportions, says Professor Roberts. He predicts there will be vast "dead zones" in our oceans where only jellyfish will thrive. He says the Deep Horizon disaster in the Gulf off Mexico made headlines for weeks - yet the fishing fleets in the Gulf kill more marine life in a single day than the oil spill did over months.



The European Commission has now announced plans to increase fish quotas for several species, including cod and haddock, in certain fisheries. When he heard this conservationist Xavier Pastor, of the campaign group Oceana, described it as a "disgrace for Europe".

## It's all in the Genes

Why are supermarket tomatoes perfectly formed balls of watery nothingness?

"In the early 1990s what changed the tomato industry was the use of non-ripening mutant genes, genes that came from natural mutations that have been used to extend shelf-life in the fruit," explains Professor Graham Seymour of Nottingham University. "But this has been quite a blunt instrument, because when you slow ripening down you also slow down those other processes like flavour development and colour development." Professor Seymour and a team of scientists from around the world have now mapped the genome of the tomato. He told the BBC News online that this will now make it, "possible to target the genes that control flavour separately from those that control shelf-life". He explained that it will soon be possible to produce tomatoes that have a long shelf life and the strong, sweet flavour of home grown tomatoes.

## Toast and ?

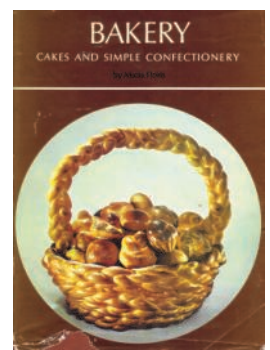
Marmalade has declined sharply in popularity. The proportion of families that eat the preserve on their morning toast has declined from 36% 40 years ago to just 7% today.

## Feminie Logic!

'Well you see, guys, it's like this . . . A herd of buffalo can only move as fast as the slowest buffalo. And when the herd is hunted, it is the slowest and weakest ones at the back that are killed first. This is natural selection, it is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps improving by the regular killing of the weakest members. In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Now, as we know, excessive intake of alcohol kills brain cells. But naturally, it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first. In this way, regular consumption of wine eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine. And that, fellers, is why you always feel smarter after a few glasses.'



# Maria Floris – Baker Extraordinaire by Josephine Jackson



**D**id you know that the Wine and Food Society once had a publishing company? Well I didn't until recently. I was surprised to find that in 1968 the Society published:

## *Bakery, Cakes and Simple Confectionery by Maria Floris*

I have accumulated rather a lot of cookery books (too many, I must admit) and some of them spend their lives on a high shelf, rarely seeing the light of day. *Bakery* fell into this category. I bought my copy in 1971 through The Cookery Book Club, long before I had any connection with the Society.

Recently, in a sudden fit of domestic energy, I cleared out a cupboard in which I keep pots and pans I hardly ever use and at the back found my savarin mould. I can't remember when I last used it, but it is surely over thirty years ago.

I decided, then and there, to make a savarin. I had all the necessary ingredients, and all I needed was a recipe. As is my usual habit when attempting something with which I am not familiar, I collected together all the cookery books, which were likely to have the recipe for a savarin. Among these was *Bakery*.

I vaguely remember attempting one or two of Madame Floris's recipes soon after acquiring the book. Beside one I wrote "This works." The underlining was my way of informing my future self that other recipes in the book had failed. When things go wrong you blame yourself if you are young, and the recipe if you are old. I was young in 1971, and *Bakery* was exiled to the high shelf. I didn't like to be reminded of failures.

Having discovered its provenance, I read the whole book before I got down to preparing my savarin. This is a book to enjoy reading rather than one to use as a source of recipes. Inconsistencies and impossibilities occur within the recipes. One is liable to find that the suggested cake tin is too small to accommodate the mixture, or the amount of flour suggested is wrong. Madame Floris was a baker who cooked by instinct, not needing to make an exact note of quantities or cooking times.

Maria must have been a formidable woman. Brought up in Hungary, she came to England in the 1930s. She and her husband opened a bakery in a fashionable part of London and soon attracted a clientele of the social élite.

In the book she is not shy of a little name-dropping. One stumbles across the name of Winston Churchill in several chapters. It seems that his favourite pastry was the humble jam tart. Maria made his birthday cakes for many years, and on his 80<sup>th</sup> she received an invitation to his party at 10, Downing Street. "He greeted me, took my hand between his two hands and said, 'How nice to see you, Madame Floris. You've played such a big part in my life.' What is a knighthood or any other reward equal to this?"

Maria Floris made wedding cakes for Clarissa Churchill (Lady Eden) and, many years later, for Princess Margaret. Moving aside from cakes, her biscuits were widely appreciated. "It was immediately after the war, or perhaps even during it, that we started to make and pack in Fortnum and Mason tins, thousands and thousands of biscuits. ....We would send one consignment and it would stay only a few hours in the shop before being sold."

Throughout the book there are anecdotes from her childhood in Hungary. She must have come from a family who were well off, and where no one was ever hungry. She tells us about the family cook who was inspirational. Her recipes demand lashings of butter, cream, eggs, and nuts – in fact a veritable gluttonous indulgence. There is no mention of the years of rationing during the war. I don't know how she managed to keep her business going in dark times, but somehow she did.

There are chapters on bread, cakes, pastries, biscuits, petits fours and "simple confectionery". I wouldn't find elaborate sugar spinning or marrons glacés or indeed most of the recipes in this chapter "simple", but it is nice to know how these complex tasks are mastered. As it happened, I didn't find a recipe for a savarin, but there was one for rum baba which I used. To add to my confidence, I consulted recipes in three other books, and the end result was successful.

I don't think I shall be using *Bakery* on a regular basis, but Maria Floris will not be forgotten. My main sources for recipes will continue to be Elizabeth David, who wafts me up into flights of fancy, and Delia Smith who brings me safely down to earth again. But *Bakery* deserves its place on a more accessible shelf.

If you have a copy of *Bakery*, may I suggest you fetch it out? You will have an entertaining read. It is easy to imagine how Londoners loved her in the thirties and why André Simon asked her to write this book. Maria Floris was a baker extraordinaire. ★



# around the branches - Restaurant Awards

## St James's Branch Present Restaurant Awards



### Pied a Terre, London

On Thursday 14th June a small party of members returned for lunch at Pied a Terre. At the end of which Ari Sofianos presented Chef Marcus Eave and Proprietor David Moore with our Society's Award for excellence for the superb dinners they had prepared for our Branch at the restaurant's Private Dining Room on 14th and 15th March this year. All dishes at these dinners were beautifully presented and had a harmonious balance of flavours. The wines perfectly matched the food, and service was impeccable.

**From Left - Ari Sofianos, Marcus Eaves (Head Chef) Mathieu Germond (Restaurant Manager),**

### The Sportsman, Seasalter, Kent

The Sportsman is, without doubt, the finest gastropub in the UK. Stephen Harris, who bought the premises in 1999 together with his brother Phil, is a self-taught chef who makes full use of the excellent fish and seafood available in the area. He is obsessive about ingredients and cooks them in an unfussy way to bring out their full flavour. He is assisted by Dan Flavell, who is now the official head chef. In August last year 17 members were served a spectacular seven course tasting lunch that include crab risotto, grilled slip sole, braised turbot and roast lamb, among others. Six members returned for lunch in June, during which they presented the proprietors with our Society's

Award for Excellence in recognition of that impressive lunch.



**Stephen Harris, Dan Flavell, Ari Sofianos and Phil Harris**

## Dates for Your Diary

**IWFS Helsinki Branch 25th Anniversary at the Restaurant Savoy Eteläesplanadi 14, 00130 Helsinki**

**Friday, September 14th 2012 at 6 pm**

*Menu by Chef Kari Aihinen, wines selected by Sommelier Antti Uusitalo*

Tickets 160 € per person, including Champagne Reception and wines with dinner.

Bookings to Branch Secretary Jaana Keränen E mail: Jaana.Keranen@peltonenlmr.fi

by September 10th 2012. Dress code black tie or dark suit.

For more details Jaakko Rahola E mail: jaakko.rahola@kolumbus.fi

**Merseyside & Mid-Cheshire Branch have been offered the**

**Belgrave Suite at the Chester Grosvenor Hotel**

**for our**

**Private Christmas Party on 13th December 2012**

Michelin star chef Simon Radley will be creating a superb menu and we are looking forward to a repeat of last year's memorable evening.

Champagne Reception, 4 Course Celebration Dinner Party, Half a bottle of Sommelier's choice of wine.

Dancing to Frank Sinatra and Nat King Cole 'Romantic Selections' by 'Rat Pack' entertainer

Start Christmas with our Special Party - £71.00 fully inclusive. Deposit of £17.50 per person required to secure your place.

Contact Angela Britland 0161 4428083 E mail: angelabritland@hotmail.co.uk

or Val Bishop 01745 860136 E mail: karnak.fvb@btinternet.com as soon as possible



# around the branches - West Yorkshire



## Foraging – fleeting fad or here to stay?

We enlisted the help of local well-known experts when we went foraging in early July. Chris Bax, a forager who cooks and has appeared on many TV programmes to introduce the topic. Stephanie Moon, a chef who forages and has represented Yorkshire on the Great British Menu for the last two years, is a very experienced forager, introducing 'wild' ingredients onto the menu of Ridding Park Hotel, where she is chef consultant.

The plan was for us to learn why foraging has taken off across the highest levels of the world of gastronomy - notably by Danish chef Rene Redzepi, of Noma, the 'world's best restaurant' and closer to hand by Simon Rogan at L'Enclume. Chris and his wife Rose took us on a foraging walk to explore the area then Steph served us a supper using foraged ingredients. Anticipation levels were high when the group of 33 set off on the first part of the evening. Many were expecting to have to walk a fair distance from our base (my house, set on the edge of a village). That was the first surprise – we hardly went more than 100 yards away.

This was Rose Bax's account of the walk: *"We set off into the garden and almost immediately found Sweet Cicely which although wild, was growing very well. This was a good one to start with as Chef was using its beautiful aniseed sweetness with goat's cheese in choux buns as a canapé. We left the garden to find many plants typically found around suburban Britain. Plants that thrive on disturbed soils such as Hairy Bittercress with its distinctive rosette of leaves and peppery watercress kick, Hedge Garlic that loves the edges of woodland and tastes of garlicky onions (the root has a horseradish like bite and Chef used it in our supper). Throughout the walk, we showed everyone plants that are easy to find and easy to use, from Thistle stems to Meadowsweet, Jelly Ear fungus to Wood Aven. We walked and chatted for an hour taking in at least a dozen plants. In just this short time we found new ingredients that can be used in salads, flavourings to spice up wild dishes or add interest to alcohol, and even a vanilla substitute!"*

For those of us on the forage it was a revelation. This was Chris's advice: *"You need to know the land and to experience it using all your senses. Don't rely only on your eyes, sometimes your mind can start to see what you want to see and not what is really there. This causes people to identify plants incorrectly, sometimes with painful consequences. Avoid 'forager's anxiety' by just stopping and thinking. Like the importance of smell – if a plant doesn't smell of garlic then it won't be wild garlic (even if it looks like it). Places are also important too, a plant that looks right but which is in completely the wrong habitat is very unlikely to be the thing that your eyes might think it is, because habitat influences the type of plants that will grow"*.

Our senses did work overtime – as Chris had told us. We picked, smelt and tasted plants and seeds of whose existence and relevance most of us were ignorant. There was a real buzz as we went back to the house. After Steph had talked us through what we were to eat, came the proof of why she and her peers have gone 'wild'.

This is a simplified version of her menu:

Goats cheese with sweet cicely seed  
Vegetarian foragers parcel using rosebay willow herb  
Trout marinated in elderflower  
Mackerel BBQ with 'Jack by the Hedge' root  
Pigeon with Nettle Spelt  
Rabbit with Mugwort Dahl  
Plate of desserts - Meadowsweet biscuit, Corn mint and cumin granite, Ground Ivy Jelly, Chocolate Marquise with forager's infusion Wood sorrel Mojito  
Coffee and lemon balm tea



Chris Bax (right) introduces sweet cicely



## For further information:

Chris and Rose Bax run "Taste the Wild" – which offers "Fun & informative wild food foraging, cooking & craft courses". See 'www.tastethewild.co.uk'. Steph Moon writes about foraging for food in Yorkshire's hedgerows, with many ideas and recipes, in her "The Wild Cooks' Blog" – 'www.thewildcook.com'.

Steph Moon explains her menu



# around the branches - Northamptonshire



Montgomery in the Making

## Cheddar & Cider in Somerset

Twenty members enjoyed two days in the Somerset area in May. We started with an instructive tour of Mumford's two acre vineyard near Bath. Owner Tony Cox told us about his vines, the varieties and the reason for growing them, and included some fascinating asides about the kestrels, who keep down the grape loving crows, the owls and other wildlife. He then took us into the winery, where he makes his own wine and wine for other growers, and treated us to a most interesting tasting. We enjoyed excellent white blends, his standard red made in 2006 & 2010 from Triomphe d'Alsace, and the 2009 vintage including Rondo to introduce more tannin, which was much approved.

We then adjourned to Wells, our home for the next 2 nights. Most members ate at the Rugantino Restaurant in the Ancient Gatehouse Hotel where we enjoyed a very pleasant Italian meal with wines from their interesting list.

Next morning we had the great privilege, as visitors are not normally allowed, of visiting James Montgomery's establishment in North Cadbury where he makes his renowned unpasteurised cheddar. We were shown the cheese making in progress and the milking parlour, where we learnt that all the milk comes straight from Montgomery cows, born and raised on the farm, and fed on the best quality grass and silage all produced on the farm. Mr. Montgomery then told us about the processes of making and maturing cheese in the shed where the truckles of cheddar mature for a year or in some cases a year and a half. We tasted these delicious cheddars, and also cheeses of the Raclette and Gouda styles made from Jersey milk. We finished by buying cheese in the village shop.

A light and delicious lunch was taken at the Kingdon Inn, Kingdon, accompanied by Rolly Gassman 2007 Pinot Blanc. We then moved on to Burrow Hill farm at Kingsbury Episcopi where Julian Temperley introduced us to the mysteries of cider brandy. The orchard, with more than 40 varieties of apples, was just coming into bloom, and the presence of lambs, chickens and turkeys under the trees presented a charmingly bucolic scene. We crossed the farmyard to the distillery where cider is distilled, and once this process had been explained we moved on to the maturing shed, full of barrels of the brandy gently taking on colour and flavour. Mr. Temperley told us of his 4 year battle to achieve EU PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) status for his distinctive cider brandy. We then had a tasting of an aperitif and a digestif made from cider and cider brandy, and then a range of the brandies of varying ages up to 20 years old.

We were impressed to see the floods on the Somerset levels on the way back and arrived in Wells just in time for some of us to attend evensong in the Cathedral. In the evening we met at The Old Spot Restaurant for an excellent dinner. The chef, Ian Bates did us proud with twice baked Gruyere soufflé with onions, thyme and cream, roast guinea fowl with mushroom pithivier, braised endive and Madeira and panna cotta with praline and coffee syrup. We drank Reid's blanc de blancs champagne, Boizel, a dry white L'Alouette de Chateau Labadie 2010 Bordeaux Blanc sec, and an Italian Red, Salice Salentino 2009 Masseria Pietrosa made from Negromaro in Puglia, and finished with a 2005 Clos du Portail Sauterne.

Our final visit the next day was to Brown and Forrest's smokery near Hambridge. Jesse Pattison showed us the two surprisingly small smokeries, one for hot and one for cold smoking. He explained the processes and the products that he produces for Fortnum and Mason, an impressive list of top London restaurants, Borough market and his mail order business. We then adjourned to the café for lunch where we were able to sample some of his merchandise. Several of us enjoyed smoked eel, a speciality of the house, with rye bread, beetroot and horseradish. Those of us going straight home then bought goods from the shop, but the rest of us planned to buy later by mail order. His list is extensive, and includes smoked Montgomery cheddar and smoked Arctic char among the usual offerings.

All four producers were enthusiasts, dedicated to creating the best product they possibly could, which they amply proved in the tastings they gave us and we were particularly impressed by James Montgomery's support for his village shop.

**Robin Sheppard, Secretary**

## West Yorkshire cont:

"Amazing" was the response of one of our members, whose initial attitude had been on the positive side of sceptical. The wonderful intensity of the flavours is how I will remember the meal. As we ate Chris and Rose passed on more helpful advice. Here's another extract from their notes:-

"Be aware that that there might be a backlash at some point from people who are worried about the countryside being plundered. However, foraging is about understanding and respecting the natural environment and providing that pickers follow a basic code of conduct it can only improve our knowledge and husbandry of the countryside. This is what the law says about foraging. Along public rights of way, you can forage without a problem. As long as it's for your own use you can take flowers, fruit, foliage and fungi. What you shouldn't do is dig up roots without the permission of the landowner, or deprive the owner of the whole plant by taking all the foliage. You should also pick from several different trees or shrubs if possible – and remember to leave some for the birds" Judging from the remarks made that evening and since, it was one of the most successful functions we have held. Perhaps it's too soon to know how far guests will embrace the philosophy. For it is a new way of thinking about the food we eat, an extension of the mantra of using locally produced ingredients that many of us try to follow. But it's clear that the switch from cultivated to wild ingredients taking place in restaurants all over the world has to be experienced to pass judgement.

**Tim Gittins**

# around the branches - Leicester

## Branch Activities - 2012

We started the year with a return visit to Firenze at Kibworth on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January arranged by Roger Austin. Firenze is an Italian restaurant owned by Lino and Sara Pol which features in various guides and weekend Telegraphs. Our party took over the whole restaurant which has a delightful ambience. We were greeted with a glass of pink prosecco, Nanni Rizzi Rosato, and trays of delicious canapés. We started with mushroom pancakes with a fontina cheese sauce and served with Grechetto Vignabaldo 2010 from Umbria, a fresh tasting white wine. The main course was boned, stuffed quail with porcini mushrooms and pancetta with potato puree, lentils and cotechino sausage accompanied by a red wine from Puglia, Terre di Sava, Negroamaro Luccarelli 2010. We had a trio of Italian puddings for desert and a NV pudding wine, Marsala Superiore Dolce, Curatolo from Sicily. Coffee and special Firenze sweets made a delightful finish to a very good meal and an opportunity to taste superior Italian wines. Cost £50.

Our AGM on the first of March was as usual held at the Leicestershire Golf Club and arranged by Margaret Bowen. We had an amicable meeting and elected Keith Wood as our chairman for 2012/13. Members gave suggestions for venues in his year. Margaret had managed to persuade the lady chef at the Golf club to produce a great dinner, the best we've ever had there in my opinion. Our aperitif was Lindemans Bin 30, sparkling rosé, a welcome change from the ubiquitous Prosecco. We started our meal with a salmon and prawn mousse partnered by avocado jelly. We drank a Pouilly Fume Domaine des Fines Caillotes Jean Pabiot 2009. The main course was a very tender roast fillet of beef with a peppercorn sauce, fondant potatoes and well cooked seasonal vegetables accompanied by Chateau la Tour de Medoc, Cru Bourgeois 2004. For pudding we enjoyed blueberry poached pear with a Champagne syllabub all for £38. We lingered over coffee and chocolates before going home feeling very contented.

Peter Collier arranged a dinner at Lake Isle in Uppingham on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May. Lake Isle is a well established restaurant on the High Street in Uppingham accessed by a narrow little alley taking one to the side of the property and a rather cramped bar. However



a pleasant spacious restaurant opens off it with windows overlooking the High Street. On arrival we enjoyed a glass of Sestiere Castello Prosecco. For the

starter we chose between a crab and prawn thermidor tart or a ham hock terrine with panfried quails eggs, watercress and piccalilli dressing. The white wine was Anakena, a Single Vineyard Viognier from Rappel Valley, Chile. The main course was a duo of lamb - roasted rack and a medallion of braised shoulder - with creamed Savoy cabbage, celeriac and caraway or grilled monkfish with roasted courgettes, parsley and preserved lemon cous cous with a harissa and saffron dressing. There were accompanying vegetables including rather odd but delicious roasted whole carrots coated with breadcrumbs. The red wine was Louis Latour, Domaine de Valmoissine, Pinot Noir, France. For pudding we could choose individual baked alaskas, - very sweet and seemingly devoid of ice cream in the middle - or triple



Ham hock terrine with quails eggs

chocolate marquise. The alternative cheese platter may have been preferable. We paid £48.50.

Margaret Bowen arranged a Luncheon for us at Langar Hall, Nottinghamshire in June. We were blessed with a sunny day in the midst of weeks of rain so it was pleasant to drive into the countryside to find the hotel owned by Imogen Skirving author of 'the Reluctant Restaurateur'. We enjoyed a glass of Spanish Cava – Portaceli Reserva – Castellvi De La Marca before moving into the beautiful dining room resplendent with chandeliers.

Our first course was asparagus with poached egg and hollandaise sauce accompanied by La Petite Ferme Maison Blanc 2010, a Chenin Blanc from Franschhoek, South Africa. An unusual but delicious dish of Moroccan Lamb with cous cous and chunks of cucumber in mint yoghurt followed. The Australian house red, Six Foot Six – Geelong, a shiraz from Victoria complimented the rich meat perfectly. For pudding we chose between a baked lemon cheesecake with a fruit compote and a raspberry sorbet or two local Stilton cheeses from nearby villages – Colston Bassett and Cropwell Bishop. Tiny meringues came with our coffee. The sous chef came to talk to us and explained how all their food was locally sourced. We were invited to visit the vegetable garden and went home happy to have paid £53.50 for such good food in elegant surroundings and with excellent service.

Drs. Keith and Pippin Wood arranged our now annual summer luncheon at Hambleton Hall on Wednesday July 11<sup>th</sup>. Again we were blessed with some sunshine squeezed between a morning of heavy showers and so we were able to enjoy a glass of Blanc de Blanc on the terrace overlooking the delightful garden with Rutland Water sparkling in the background. The canapés included tiny beetroot meringues with a cream cheese filling. Our party of thirty occupied the main dining room.

For our starter we chose between a mushroom ravioli, a single cushion of pasta with a pea and bacon velouté or an elaborate chicken terrine with grape chutney. We enjoyed a white wine 2011 Picpoul de Pinet, Félines Jourdan. from SW France.



# around the branches - Lusaka



"A glass of sherry on a sun-drenched terrace - south of the equator"



glasses we were able to watch the Thames Flotilla paying homage to the Queen.

The party carried on until the small hours; the die-hards retiring to Andy's Party Bar.

What a celebration - what a Royal Event - what a Monarch. We are indeed proud to be an African part of a great International Society."

And so say all of us!

**Christina Holding**

## The Diamond Jubilee in the Sun!

Forty-nine members and guests of the Lusaka Branch celebrated, in style, the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. It was indeed a far cry from the rain drenched Thames Pageant but we were supporting you in spirit.

The event was held at the residence of Andy Anderson, currently our EAC representative. Our Secretary, Ken Cummins, returned from a visit to England with extra baggage - bunting, tablecloths and other memorabilia to grace the occasion, and the venue looked stunning.

The menu was worthy of the occasion, taken from The Coronation Cookbook by Marguerite Patten OBE, and adapted to suit the local market.

We were delighted that the British High Commissioner James Thornton and his wife Anne could join us, proposing the Toast and cutting our Jubilee Cake. The sun shone on our festivities, and in between raising



**Andy in Party Mood**



## Leicester cont.

The main course was a pan fried fillet of salmon topped with an intriguing biscuit made of squid and tapioca or a mound of blade of beef with a duxelles of mushrooms and a red wine sauce. The sommelier had chosen the wines and we enjoyed a full bodied red, 2009 Colli Tortonesi Braghé, Claudio Mariotto from Piedmont, superb with the beef.

The caramel lime and ginger soufflé was delicious also the alternative, a caramelized lemon tart with raspberries. Petit fours came with a plentiful supply of coffee – all excellent value for £57.50.

We were privileged to have Ron Barker with us and afterwards he gave a small talk outlining the benefits of belonging to the IWFS and he kindly answered our questions.

**Mary Jewell**



# around the branches - Merseyside & Mid-Cheshire



## A Sunny Warm Wales in 2012!!

After much deliberation regarding our Summer Picnic and the local weather conditions, we were pleasantly surprised to enjoy an afternoon of sunshine, great food and acceptable temperatures, which enabled us to remain outdoors and take in the wonderful surroundings of Jane and Gordon's beautiful house and gardens and appreciate the views over the spectacular North Wales scenery.



Jane and Gordon plus members and friends, created a menu to be proud of and the guests were treated to a truly 'gourmet' experience, which was accompanied by a wine tasting, given by Paul Bishop. There were 4 joints of sirloin of beef, two Australian and two Welsh black. One of each was roasted med/rare and one of each rare - both cooked in an AGA. It was generally agreed that the Welsh beef came out top.

The wine tasting\* was offered with each course which enabled members to savour the combinations of flavours and appreciate the efforts of the 'chefs and sommeliers'!!

### Menu:

Canapes of Quail eggs on Lump Fish, 'Devils on Horseback'

Starter : Hot Smoked Salmon, homemade Hollandaise Sauce, Samphire and trimmings

Main : Comparative tasting of two varieties of beef - Australian and Welsh Black, new potatoes, tomato and fresh pea dressing, fresh salad and homemade horseradish

Sweets : Summer trifle, Lemon Souffle, Strawberry Pavlovas, Gooseberry Pie, Fresh Peaches

Cheese Board : Wonderful Stilton with selection of biscuits

Fresh coffee/tea

**Wines\*** The wines were chosen from the championship blind tasting at the Wine Society and were the favourites of their tasters plus two of Paul's own choice

Sumarraca Reserve Brut Cava 2009 : Chablis Samuel Billaud 2012 : Weinert Cabernet Sauvignon 2001 : Bricco Rosso Suagna Langhe 2008 ~ Wine Society. Paul's choice from Tanners : Churchill's Estates Douro 2008, Montefalco Rocco Fabbri 2008.



## Garden Tour of Bodysgallen Hall, Llandudno

As Bodysgallen Hall is a favourite with Branch, members were delighted to return and enjoy a late morning 'Coffee and Biscuits on the Terrace' at the start of their tour of the superb gardens in the grounds of the Hall.



Head gardener, Robert Owen has been occupied at Bodysgallen for over 30 years. During this time, he and his team have restored the grounds from a derelict overgrown wilderness to the award winning garden it is today.

Robert explained the process of change which has taken place and informed the party that most of the food consumed in the hotel restaurant, is grown in the garden. Also much of the foliage for the beautiful floral displays, which can be seen around the interior of the hotel, comes from the garden

On completion of our tour, we enjoyed a glass of wine and delicious 2 course luncheon and those energetic enough, revisited the gardens for an afternoon stroll and took afternoon tea on the terrace, in order to extend the experience!

**Val Brookfield, Secretary**



# around the branches - Moscow

## "Uzbekistan Gourmet Adventures"

Uzbekistan is a far away and mysterious country. Its long history and traditions are the subject of admiration for people all over the world. What do we know about the culinary culture of this country? This spring, members of the Moscow (National) branch of the IWFS decided to look into this and with the help of Russian tourist company "V mire fantaziy" (In a fantasy world) undertook a gastronomic tour to Uzbekistan.

The tour, named "Uzbekistan Gourmet" included visits to the cities of Bukhara and Samarkand, and was composed in such a way that participants were able to fully enjoy the national character. The tourists were taught to cook traditional Uzbek dishes such as, pilaf, lagman, manty (steam baked dough stuffed with chopped meat), hasib (lamb sausage), by the best chefs and housewives, who agreed to share their experience. The action took place in the national houses, which are themselves 'epy' masterpieces of architecture, using authentic dishes and old recipes. Also the participants themselves went to buy food at the farm market and had to bargain, to keep within a fixed amount. In Uzbekistan the ability to trade is considered to be a special gift and is widely welcomed by sellers.

The program also included visits to famous restaurants and tea houses, also a tasting of vintage wines at Khovrenko wine plant. Then a trip to the mountains where they prepared wonderful dishes on the open fire, shurpa and damlama, and served them by the banks of a mountain stream. The participants, who wanted to explore the area, could rent a donkey led by young "donkeyteers".

We were introduced to the amazing people and ancient traditions while being given a unique opportunity to join the cultural heritage of the Uzbek nation in its entirety. This also included the national classical music, dance, art and more, making this an unforgettable trip. Get on board! The next trip is scheduled for October 2012!

*Elena Puzakova*



Home made bread



Dinner at a local house



LEFT Two light lunches ABOVE Manty master class



Lagman master class

BELOW Lamb Samsa

Pilaf master class



# around the branches - Cape Town



## The 'Family Album' Tasting & Lunch

In July members met at Casa Mori, Eugene and Marilyn Mori's guest house overlooking Stellenbosch's Bottelary Road Valley with sweeping vistas across to Table Mountain, on quite the most exquisite mid-winter's day. Eugene's



Ladies Food Committee



Pasta e Fagioli

father Bruno was a former Chairman and, through his Monis wine business, an associate of Andre Simon.

The venue was fitting as the idea was to remember some late members and friends of the Branch through wines they made, or made famous, or just loved. We broached our very last stocks of the iconic George Spies 1966 and 1968 cabernets, and closed the chapter on exclusive magnum bottlings from over twenty years ago. Our hope that the libations would be potable was magnificently exceeded; the old wines were agricultural artworks we respect and admire.

Arriving members were met with an aperitif of **Averys Bristol Fashion Medium Cream Sherry** that Chris Bonsall donated from London, in celebration of **John's** life and friendship with the Branch. Vice-Chairman Hilton Kuck led the toast.



Marilyn Mori

We then moved inside to a duo of champagnes of at least twenty years' maturity, both of which were spritely and delicious. Graham Blackshaw shared the anecdote of **Zak Bosman** ordering – and finishing as Graham arrived – a bottle of champagne which was for *his* account as he was late for lunch. Graham has kept precise time since and **Charles Heidsieck Brut Reserve** was a fitting salute! Then veteran member Mark McLoughlin shared a delightful eulogy to **Andre Simon** as we tasted the elegant **Champagne Andre Simon NV**.

A pair of younger reds followed. **Bruno Mori** was remembered with **Casa Mori 'Bruno'**, a multi-vintage sangiovese-led blend made by Eugene (who presented it) and son Julian. It showed the Italianate tannic structure that begged for food. Henry Barenblatt highlighted the parallels in the life and times of **John Featherstone** with **Kanonkop Paul Sauer 2003** – SA's first growth – kindly donated by



Legacy of the Shoot



Apple Cream Pie with Ricotta

John's widow Muffy.

A pair of magnums that were blended by the then-wine committees exclusively for the Branch was next. Our doubts that **IWFS Celebration 1991 Jubilee Red** (**Ross Gower**, Klein Constantia) and **IWFS Celebration 1989 Cabernet-Merlot** (**Mike Dobrovic**, Delaire) would be drinkable were quickly dispelled as Allan Mullins amused us with yarns of the birth of these wines.

Winemaker **George Spies** was apparently unimpressed when he moved to Stellenbosch Farmers' Winery as part of the Monis purchase in 1965. He made small, non-commercial batches of cabernet sauvignon in **1966** and **1968** as he believed they should be, to make the point to his new colleagues. John Grant presented the duo of quite remarkable old masters that would not have seen a splinter of oak; they had stunning fruit purity and truly resembled mature Bordeaux. The next wine, **Andre Simon Memorial Dinner 1962 Cabernet Sauvignon** had been a mystery: we only knew it sported a plastic capsule that was a novel Columbit product at the time, and that George Spies 'had something to do with it'. That 'something' became apparent on tasting – it shared a remarkable similarity to the 1966 and 1968. Excited research in the records of Monis strongly suggested it was made by George while still at Monis, under the label of 'Chateau Monis'.

**Lannice Snyman** was a culinary writer and publisher without peer in the Cape and her book, *Vin de Constance with Michel Roux Jr* set new standards in food and wine matching. Yours truly celebrated her memory with the regal **Vin de Constance 2001**. Finally, Ross James donned an outrageous smoking jacket given to him by **Tony Mossop** – with whom 'outrageous' and cigars were synonymous – to remember a friend through his wine, **Axe Hill Cape Vintage Port 2003**.

Our hosts the fabulous Family Mori, in concert with Sharon Ball and Gail Gibbs, then offered a superlative winter luncheon of:- Pasta e Fagioli (Hearty Tuscan Bean Soup with Garlic Bread), served with Oak Valley 2007 White Blend, Bouchard Finlayson 2007 Chardonnay. Legacy of the Shoot (Game Pie with Polenta and Greens) with a Thelema 2003 Merlot Reserve and Torta di Melle alla Panna (Apple Cream Pie with Ricotta)

This was an event to answer the question: 'Is IWFS still relevant in a time of the globalization of food and wine?' It was a unique opportunity, magnificently taken.

**David Swingler, Chairman**  
Far left with cellarmaster



# around the branches - London

## A Return to The Ritz

The St James's Branch decided it was time to go 'Putting on The Ritz' again on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April this year, and this time we invited the members of the London Branch to join us. Successes there in recent years, we wondered whether Could John Williams surpass himself yet again?

The aperitif was served in the incredibly elegant off to a flying start. We drank Heidsieck Monopole's vintage in Champagne, producing beautifully balanced The canapés which went with this were outstanding, which looked like little miniature cones of pink ice cream except that they were filled with a delicious smoked salmon mousse. Next came crab rolls with apple and ginger and hot *tartlets royals* with Alsace bacon, but the *piece de resistance* was what they described as brioche pizza with girolles and truffles. You have never tasted anything so delicious as these miniature master-pieces!

The champagne flowed generously and, at just the right moment, we were called through to the magnificent Music Room for dinner. It is impossible to dine here without being a little bowled over by the elegant pink French decor. It is cleverly done so that, whilst impressive, the room feels wonderfully comfortable too.

Ari Sofianos had chosen some particularly interesting wines for the evening and John Williams had taken great care to ensure that the food harmonised perfectly with them. The first course was a simple but delicious tian of incredibly fresh Orkney crab with which we drank a Riesling Trocken 2008 from Sybille Kuntz in the Mosel. In the early days of German trocken wines, I had my suspicions about them because they sometimes felt a little hollow – as though the Germans had not quite got the hang of making dry wine. But this is the kind of wine that has made me change my mind: it had superb freshness, excellent

Riesling varietal character and intensity and a wonderful harmony overall.

We were next treated to roast halibut with avocado. The fish was perfect and blended well with the wine, which was a Chassagne Montrachet Chateau de la Maltroye 1999 *en magnum*. There was much discussion on the wine's colour which was somewhere between gold and amber. One or two ladies thought it was slightly pink but it was pointed out that this was the effect of the pink decor in the room! Despite the rather deep colour, it was still drinking beautifully although clearly near the end of its window of maturity. Unfortunately, however, there was considerable bottle variation and some guests from other tables reported that the wine from their bottle had 'gone'.

For the main course, Chef had produced one of his signature dishes – Saddle of Lamb Belle Epoque. This was an absolutely delicious saddle of lamb, potato mousseline, foie gras, girolles, morels and button onions, all assembled in the sheathing of a leg of lamb, making a stunning picture on the plate. Two vintages of the same wine were served with the meat: Chateau Sociando-Mallet 2000 and 1995. Sociando-Mallet is a chateau that has come a long way in recent years and in the unlikely event of Bordeaux ever being re-classified, it would almost certainly become a Cru Classé. The 2000 was still a deep pure ruby in colour. It had excellent fruit intensity, ripeness and length. The 1995 was charming but noticeably different in character. The colour was just turning garnet, the nose had a lot more spice and the palate rather less fruit but was rounder and a most attractive example of that excellent vintage. It was simply a matter of whether you prefer your claret a little younger or a little older so the room was divided as to which was the favourite.

The pudding was a masterpiece. Few people can make a perfect soufflé for one but to do it for 60 people is impossible...unless your name is John Williams. Not only had all sixty individual soufflés risen perfectly, but they had the most glorious flavour and aroma of the freshest tropical fruits, especially passion fruit. The texture was as good as the flavour and many guests were transported to a sort of soufflé Nirvana by this dish! The wine had much the same effect – it was Chateau Suduiraut 1997. This was the greatest vintage since 1990 but not an easy one to make. Indeed, Suduiraut had to send the pickers into the vineyard for 42 days in order to pick grape by grape in perfect condition. The result was a triumph – rich, sweet, intense stone fruit with a slightly floral character and good balancing acidity. This match of pudding and

wine was surely made in Heaven!

After a few delightful friandises, it was time to go home taking some happy memories with us. John Williams had done it again – he had served us another dinner that will linger in our memories for a long time to come.

**Gregory Bowden**



Following on from one or two outstanding successes the evening could match up to those occasions.

Marie Antoinette Suite and it got the evening 2005 vintage. As in Bordeaux, this was a lovely wines with attractive ripeness and good acidity. We had cornets of smoked salmon Moscovite, which looked like little miniature cones of pink ice cream except that they were filled with a delicious smoked salmon mousse.



# around the branches - Manchester

## A Market Visit to The Land Of The Bury Black Pudding



Flaming June it wasn't but the welcome given to 24 members of the Manchester Branch by the management and stall-holders of Bury Market was incredibly warm and not even the heavy rain showers darkened our day. Bury is nine miles north of Manchester centre and Bury Market is situated in the centre of town near to the Metro station. It has won many awards including Winner "Best Food Market" - BBC Radio 4 Food and Farming Awards, Winner Best British Market - NABMA "The voice of Local Authority Markets" and Winner Most Coach Friendly Shopping Attraction.

Our rendezvous was on the covered terrace outside Katsouris Delicatessen prominently situated in the main Market Square and taking up part of the Market Hall where, after coffee or teas all round, we were welcomed by the Market Manager, Andrew Heyes, and the Operations Manager, Craig Allen. Andrew explained that the market had its charter granted in 1440 and started in the public area outside Bury Parish Church. It now has over 370 stalls mostly under cover, 250,000 visitors every week to the 200,000 square feet of selling area and sells around 50,000 products. Virtually 100% of the stalls are occupied and because they are "lock-ups", stall holders can leave the stall secure when the market isn't open without having to set them up on market days. George Katsouris introduced his long established business which stocks local and continental goodies and a wide range of specialty breads baked by his brother-in-law who owns the well-known Manchester Bakery, Barbakan.

Our party was divided in half and with Andrew escorting one group and Craig the other we set off to visit a succession of different food stalls and meet the stall holders. My group started with a visit to "Cheese Plus" which is a long established family

business now in the hands of the son, Graham Hill, selling (unsurprisingly) cheeses of every type and description as well as other dairy products, eggs etc. Graham is a real enthusiast seeking out some of the best cheeses available. He provided a tasting of several of his favourites which led to a sudden rush of purchases. It was hard to move the entire group to the next stall, The Bury Black Pudding Stall - one of two producers who are in intense competition with each other. There was an explanation of the process of making the puddings followed by a tasting of hot samples and more acquisitions. To maintain strict impartiality the other group visited the nearby Chadwick's Black Pudding Stall where the well known owner and lively speaker gave us an explanation of the various products and their history including the tripe - of which he is now the only stockist on the outdoor market.

After a quick tour through some of the non-food parts of the market to give a flavour of the wide range of products on sale we entered the "jewel in the crown", otherwise known as the Meat & Fish Hall, a self contained building within the market. There we were introduced to Martin Hayton who some years ago succeeded to his father's fish stall. Martin is up in the middle of the night every market day to go to the wholesale market to buy fish for the day's business. Much of the fish he sells comes from Scottish ports and he is incredibly knowledgeable about the produce he sells. He supplies a number of local restaurants. After more purchases were made we went to W & M Butchers (Wayne and Martin). They sell wonderful Irish beef, local lamb and pork as well as home-made sausages and burgers (including lamb and mint ones using home grown mint). The shopping bags were now taking the strain. Last but not least we were taken to Willis's fruit and vegetable stall - another father to sons business established in 1947. There we learned of the problems posed by people tending to shop at the Tescos and Asdas of the world including buying fruit and vegetables there rather than the really fresh local produce on offer in the market. These pressures have led to the number of such stalls falling to about a third of what there were in the early 1980s.

This last visit brought our tour to an end but that was not the end of our day. It was then on to Ditto Bistro a relative newcomer to the town centre where we took over the restaurant for a "Market Menu" lunch. We enjoyed a warm salad topped with pieces of Bury black pudding and bacon, followed by the chef's take on Coquilles St Jacques using whiting and prawns instead of scallops and accompanied by some well-timed vegetables. No dessert but some Lancashire cheese with slivers of celery and grapes taken with bread and biscuits was served instead. Drinks were some simple white wine and a New Zealand Pinot Noir.

Replete, the party split up, some to return to the market, others to the Lancashire Fusiliers Museum and some heading home but all vowing to return to what for many had been a hitherto unknown source of fresh high quality food.

**David Chapman**

## Wine Tasting & Supper at Bowdon Club

In May 34 members attended a wine tasting given by Oliver Haussells of C & O Wines, Timperley, Cheshire at Bowdon Cricket, Hockey & Squash Club in their Grade 11 listed Clubhouse. Oliver had been asked to present six wines which would be particularly suitable for summer drinking and these consisted of 3 white and 3 red wines.

The whites included a Gruner Veltliner from Austria, a Coteaux du Languedoc from France and Pinot Gris from Alsace. The wines were well received and the Gruner Veltliner was also used as an aperitif before our supper. The reds, a Garnacha from Spain, a Merlot from Turkey and a Corbieres from France. An interesting selection, especially the Turkish wine, as most of us had never tasted Turkish wine before. The other two reds were very good, the Spanish was excellent value at £8. The French wine from the Lafite Rothschild stable showed some class, but at around £17.50 per bottle so it should. Gastronomy, a local catering company presented a tasty menu as follows:- Lamb Tagine with jewelled cous cous and salad, Cheese - Chaume and Blue Cheddar with French bread Orange Truffle Cake and Berry Pavlova. An excellent evening was had by all.

Thanks go to committee members Ronnie Costello and Christine Redman who helped me organise this very successful evening.

**Bob Lloyd, Chairman**



## Capital Pick Bluebells

Nineteen members picked Bluebells Restaurant, on the A30 in Sunningdale, for their summer lunch on a wet soggy Saturday in July.

Bluebells has been open for seven years during which time it has built up a reputation in the area for its superb food, particularly for its lunch menu at a reasonable price. Owner John Rampello moved here from overseeing the restaurant at Wentworth Golf club and invited Adam Turley a talented young chef, who was working at Wentworth at the time, to join him in the enterprise. Alan, who has worked in several Michelin starred restaurants has built up a competent team and the kitchen runs a very tight ship.

As one of my members pointed out the restaurant has a chequered history. It was here, when it was The Red Lion pub, in July 1970, that Alan Lake,

the husband of Diana Dors who lived opposite, was involved in a pub brawl for which he was sentenced to eighteen months in prison.

We gathered to enjoy a glass of Prosecco Quartese Ruggeri, before sitting down to a three course lunch which we had pre ordered from the summer lunch menu. I find when a multi choice menu is offered, as is often the case at our lunch events, it helps the kitchen considerably to pre order (see letters page). I gave the staff a table plan with the dishes ordered at each cover so that we didn't have the distraction of waitresses having to shout down the table to ask who wants what, with the invariable 'I can't remember what I ordered'! Starters included a chicken liver parfait with pickled blueberries and toasted brioche. A timbale of blue swimmer crab with guacamole and confit peach wedges and a salad of alder wood smoked rabbit, Ventreche bacon (Ventreche tastes more like fresh pork and less like a cured meat, and is normally cured simply - just pork belly, salt, black pepper and then smoked), sautéed girolles and hazelnuts. I tried the swimmer crab at a test meal, it was a different flavour to ordinary crab and not to my palate but those that chose it said they enjoyed it very much. I had the rabbit which I found interesting as we smoke with different wood chips at home but have never tried alder. It was very good, the alder giving a distinctive flavour, I must experiment.

Main courses included Casterbridge\* onglet beef with summer watercress, sautéed potato gnocchi and roasted peach. Pan fried fillet of Devonshire plaice with marsh samphire, pickled fennel and buttered new potatoes or pan roasted grey mullet with salsa verde, pea puree and confit potatoes. I had tried the onglet at our test meal and found it superb. This cut of beef, skirt in English, has only recently appeared on UK menus. This joint is the lean muscle from the flank of the beast and needs cooking with precision, if it is allowed to cook beyond medium rare it rapidly becomes like leather. The meat, from a well hung animal, because of the position in the carcass, cooked right, is very flavoursome, juicy and delicious but don't expect the bland tenderness of fillet. All but one member, who found hers tough, thought it was excellent. Both the fish dishes were perfectly cooked and enjoyed by most.

Wines served throughout were a Macon Villages Lugny St Gengoux 2010 and a Le Coq Rouge Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Grenache 2010 from Southern France. The Macon an unoaked Chardonnay from southern Burgundy was the most popular, it was fresh, fruity, luscious and very easy drinking, it went well with fish dishes. The Le Coq Rouge Merlot was, soft and fruity and partnered the beef well.

Desserts were Peach and vanilla panna cotta with caramelised peaches. Milk chocolate and raspberry tart with milk ice cream. Pistachio crème brûlée with confit nectarines and crisp biscotti and iced summer berries with citrus sorbet and wild strawberry gel. I enjoyed the deliciously creamy brûlée with the confit nectarines which cut the richness well, though some did find the chocolate biscotti a danger to their teeth. The gentleman next to me pronounced the iced summer berries with citrus sorbet and wild strawberry gel, superb, one of the best desserts he had tasted for a long time.

A selection of coffees and teas concluded a very relaxing lunch. We will be back but will have to wait until September as the menu only changes every three months.

### **Pam Brunning, Chairman**

\*Only English beef, sired from traditional breeds and sourced from selected farms in the six counties of South-West England is used to produce Casterbridge. All cattle are finished on a natural grain diet that ensures a controlled protein intake and guarantees consistently high quality. Casterbridge beef is matured on the bone to give it its distinctive succulence & traditional flavour



## around the branches - Malmö



Idala gård

Spring came early this year. Unfortunately it left shortly thereafter and it was not back when we entered our coach for Idala gård, in the countryside, one hour's drive from Malmö. However, the surroundings were green and beautiful and even if the wind was cold, we got a warm welcome from host and hostess Hans and Pia Nyman on arrival. The premises, originally a farm, have been in the hands of the same family since 1635 and on top of the present hotel, restaurant and conference centre they are also involved in imports of Italian food and wines. This was demonstrated in the following six course

meal, served after a short presentation of their business, accompanied by a bruschetta with tomato, basil and Parma ham together with a Prosecco Spumante Brut del Veneto:

Fried zucchini flower stuffed with ricotta served with marinated scallop and lobster 2011 Roero Arneis, Azienda Armando Piazza

White asparagus, melted butter, parmesan and Parma ham 2010 Gavi di Gavi, Azienda Piccolo Ernesto

Risotto with black truffle 2008 Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, Tenuta Valdipiatta

Grilled fillet of veal, vegetable ragout and balsamico vinaigrette 2007 Barolo Bricco Boaschis, Fratelli Cavalotto

Three Italian cheeses 2009 Valpolicella Classico Ripasso, Fabiano

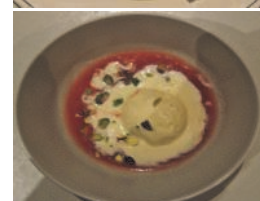
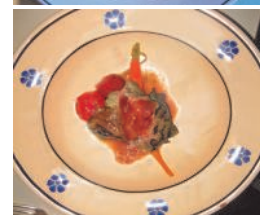
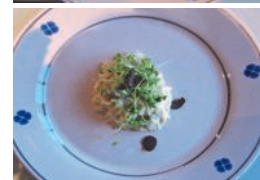
Semi-freddo 2010 Moscato d'Asti

Coffee with a small sample of grappa

The whole meal was an excellent example of rustic but still elegant, genuine Italian cooking, far away from the excesses in the fine dining places and accompanied by well-chosen wines. It was a very much-appreciated evening in a friendly atmosphere with a very open-handed host. That goes for the wines but also for the "small sample of grappa" which was on the house and turned out to be a generous tasting of three different grappa imported by Idala gård. Finishing the evening that way made the return trip back to Malmö in the middle of the night most enjoyable.

One of the, if not the most popular event of the year is the buffet catering lunch arranged in a members home. All were in agreement when we were, for the second time, generously invited by Ulla and Andreas Jaenecke for this event. The weather was unfortunately not as favourable as the rest but the house is big enough to offer a roof to everyone. I was not able to take part myself but, normally most reliable, sources confirm that both the food and all the matching wines were fully up to our high expectation. Thanks to Jaeneckes for their hospitality making the afternoon a lovely conclusion to our seasons activates.

**Rolf Fransson, Secretary**



## Blackpool

### Let them Eat Cake!

On Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 18 members of Blackpool Branch met at Aysgarth Court to eat cake and assess which wines are most appropriate to drink with it. Sweet wines are no longer as popular as they were and many branches seem now to plan meals without a dessert wine.

Members made 5 different cakes and we added 5 others from Supermarkets. The Committee provided 11 different sweet or "off-dry" wines as well as cheese and water to cleanse the pallet. The wines included a light Moscato d'Asti, a German Spatlese, a Vouvray Moelleux, wines from Sauternes, Jurancon and Alsace as well as stronger or fortified wine from Portugal and the South of France which worked with Rich fruit and Chocolate cakes.

The highlight was Welsh Cakes kindly provided by Pat James for her husband, our Secretary/Treasurer's birthday. This went with two half bottles of Chateau d'Yquem 2003 which were kindly donated by Ian Rushton to celebrate Anita's birthday.

With one exception (a sweet sparkling red from Australia) the wines were universally enjoyed. The homemade cakes were preferred to the commercial ones although we perhaps served too much of all of them. However there were very few successful matches. The Madeira Wine worked well with Madeira cake, but most of the wines tasted better without Cake!

**Ron Barker, EAC Chairman**



## around the branches - Surrey Hills



### Trevi - West Byfleet's Little Italy

In Mid June, in order to avoid the Diamond Jubilee weekend, we held our own celebration with a dinner at Trevi's a family run Italian Restaurant in West Byfleet. Seventeen diners were welcomed with a glass of Prosecco and then throughout the meal there was a choice of two wines, a Pinot Grigio Umbria Lungarotti and a Montepulciano Illuminati Riparosso. There was a choice of three starters – Smoked Salmon, Asparagus or Canneloni with Ricotta cheese. Followed by Sirloin Steak, pan-fried Salmon or sautéed Veal. Then followed the Dessert trolley, which groaned under its selection of mouth-watering dishes. Tea or coffee rounded off a thoroughly enjoyable evening in this family run restaurant.

*Helen Mills, Chairman*



## Herefordshire & Monmouthshire



### The Chairman's Luncheon

The Chairman's Luncheon in June also provided a house-warming event when members met at Yew Tree Cottage, Llangarron, the new home of branch Chairman Michael Hodinott.

With views of the rolling Herefordshire fields, surrounded by delightful 19<sup>th</sup> century watercolours, 14 guests were greeted with a glass of champagne from Jackie Simonet a Villers Marmery – a new name for many of those present. Canapés included pastry cases of mock caviar with sour cream and pork balls with mango chutney.

Despite the venue being the site of the conflict between Roundheads and Cavaliers, the buffet meal was a display of in-house co-operation and expertise. Miriam Warner, an IWFS member and former professional caterer, brought along a celebratory dish of Jubilee Chicken (described as 'Coronation Chicken with extras'), plus a platter of fillet of beef in aspic. Margaret Muir, branch member and wife of the EAC Treasurer presented a dish of local Wye salmon in a chilli crust. A centre-piece of game pie, specially commissioned from the delicatessen in Ross-on-Wye, provided a touch of luxury, surrounded by a spread of salads and breads ensuring an abundant table.

All ingredients were either grown or sourced locally, unlike the assembled company who came from as far away as Wales, Wiltshire and Bristol.

Accompanying wines were a 2010 Chablis from Domaine Jean-Marie Naulin. This was only decided upon the night before and was described by the connoisseurs as 'mineral and pebbly'. A new find was the Pinot Noir 2009 Bourgogne Hautes Cotes de Nuits from Domaine Thevenot-le-Brun and Fils which was agreed by all to be distinctly 'moreish'.

Miriam majored on the puddings with Marscapone and Raspberry Cheesecake, Pineapple Upside Down Cake, plus Raspberry Pavlova, followed by a whole Cornish Brie.

The occasion was described over coffee as 'small but perfectly formed' and the conversation was of equal quality to the repast. As a convivial way to spend a wet summer afternoon – good food and good company takes some beating.

*Judith Stares*

# around the branches - South Devon

## The Orange Tree revisited

In June, 33 members visited The Orange Tree Restaurant for the third time, and once again 'mine hosts' Bernd and Sharon Wolf gave us a warm welcome. Bernd has worked in Michelin starred restaurants and hotels in Switzerland, London, Washington D.C. and Leamington Spa. He became Masterchef of Staffordshire 2007, won a gold medal at the TUCO (The University Caterers Organisation) chef of the year award at Hotelympia London and, his own restaurant, The Orange Tree was awarded 'Restaurant of the Year 2008' by Les Routiers. We are fortunate that he and Sharon, a delightful and efficient hostess, should settle in Torquay in a restaurant that is conveniently situated in a quiet street behind the harbour.

We enjoyed 'state of the art' canapés on arrival - polenta and tomato chutney, beef and red currants, smoked salmon beautifully arranged, accompanied by Cava Castell de Olerdola Brut Reserve, a top quality Spanish Cava and a pleasant start to the proceedings.

The wine chosen to accompany the choice of two starters was Viognier Reserva – Casa Silva from Chile. A rich, complex wine with peach and apricot flavours with a burst of red currants, quite amazing. It went well with both starters. A goats cheese baked with red onion confit in a crisp filo and walnut pastry accompanied by tasty fig chutney or the soup of wild mushrooms flavoured with garlic and thyme, finished with crème fraîche and potato croutons. Both dishes were beautifully presented, the soup - pale olive green with swirls of cream and crispy croutons, the Goats Cheese with a little fresh salad garnish.

We also had a choice of main course, fillet of pan seared sea bass served on a tomato caper and spring onion butter sauce or, Crediton Creedy breast of duckling, oven roasted, served with a quite incredible blood orange and ginger sauce. Individual dishes of vegetables, ratatouille, carrots and spring greens, were served with the main course. The wine chosen to accompany these outstanding dishes was Las Toscas Cabernet, Carmenere, from Chile. It proved to be rich red with ripe and concentrated juicy fruit packed with vibrant flavours which was fantastic with the duckling. Those members choosing the sea bass were able to stay with the Viognier if they so wished. There are some members, myself included, who would not feel contented at any dinner without a really satisfying red wine served in a really large glass! Philip Redhead, our treasurer and wine enthusiast, advised us that some 10 to 15 years ago, the Carmenere grape used to be mixed with merlot grapes which ripened some two weeks later so the wine 'did not taste right' but it is now mixed with Cabernet and is outstanding.

Dessert was the house speciality, The Orange Tree Trio, iced coconut & lime parfait with pistachio & mango meringue, dark chocolate brownie with clotted cream & strawberries, vanilla panna cotta with apricot & mint salsa. For those with a less sweet tooth, a selection of Devon & Cornish cheeses with Devon chutney and oatmeal and water biscuits. Coffee or speciality tea was served with superb petit fours, chocolate fudge, fondue, coconut and pistachio.

Service was outstanding, Sharon being ably assisted by Paul, Lynne, Denise and Linda. I have to commend this Restaurant particularly for the care it takes over members dietary requirements, whether gluten free or any other problems.

Members comments: Philip – outstanding, Linda – mouth watering and special attention to my diet, David – replete (he often goes away hungry!) , Don – excellent presentation, Geeta – awesome.

**John Slater, Chairman**



## Langdon Court Hotel

We made a welcome return, by popular request, to the Langdon Court Hotel for the July meeting. Twenty five members and guests enjoyed the journey from Torquay on a lovely sunny Sunday morning. Residing beautifully in the heart of the South Hams, only six miles from Plymouth, this Grade II listed Tudor Manor House has been owned by Emma and Geoffrey Ede for some time now and they have transformed it into a much sought after country house hotel with exquisite food. Members enjoyed the sunshine as they sipped their Pimms and

sparkling Elderflower in the Jacobean Garden with the green countryside beyond as a backdrop. Before adjourning to the dining room for lunch several members strolled around the gardens and took photographs of the assembled company. Served with a San Rafael Sauvignon Blanc there was a choice of starters from homemade potted shrimp with mayonnaise and freshly baked bread, Risotto with parmesan shavings and dressed leaves, to unusual oven glazed pork belly with cauliflower puree, cornbread muffin and gremolata.

The main course choices were cornfed chicken supreme with tagliatelle, English asparagus and a rich Morel sauce or locally caught fish of the day, which turned out to be grey mullet, with wild rice, samphire, lemongrass and coriander sauce. The red wine choice was Solarena barrel-aged Tempranillo. Choices for dessert were Tiramisu served with a coffee granita, coconut pannacotta with pineapple compote and mango sorbet or a selection of fine West Country and Continental cheeses with quince jelly and crackers. Coffee, tea and petit fours ended a very pleasant day. **June Rallison, Secretary.**





# 'Somewhere Deep in the Home Counties'

Your Editor goes on an interesting sortie to find a restaurant worthy of an IWFS branch visit.

The street was parked solid with the local machinery, no not tractors as you would expect in Market Street but a few oversized Mini Coopers wedged between Bentleys, Jaguars and Porches. We spotted the triple fronted restaurant disguised as a shop on our first circuit. Eventually we found a parking space and fifteen minutes later were being ushered in by the head waiter. Yes, we had booked, we were ticked off on the computer and shown to our table. The head waiter immediately returned and placed a three legged stool next to my chair, 'for your handbag madam.' How ever have I managed for forty years without a stool for my handbag?

Bottled water was offered when the menus were brought, no thank you, a jug of cold water please. Gunga din duly arrived, with a very fancy jug with a strainer lid to keep the ice in, one problem, they forgot the ice, the water was warm and tasted of chlorine. When the wine list arrived our waiter was informed by my other half that he had looked at that on line and decided it was a rip off. We eventually chose a 125ml glass each of Cairanne, Domaine Richaud, Côtes du Rhône Villages, 2010 at £10 a glass - not a bad profit margin, £60 for a bottle of wine that retails at £14!

One look at the set lunch menu showed the standard of ingredients. As himself commented, 'I have heard of potato skins on the local pub menu but never fish skins on what is supposed to be a fine dining menu.' We were informed in exaggerated broken French, 'Ah, but sir it comes with a mackerel fillet'. Whoopee do, as a main course on a £25 three course menu, half a mackerel. We moved on to study the à la carte and eventually decided to skip a starter. I chose a breast of free range Chiltern duck, boudin blanc with confit of leg, foie gras yoghurt, peas, morels and pomme maxime for £22.00. The other half chose monk fish with a white wine and mussel sauce. As is inevitable when not ordering a starter we had a long wait while enjoying some very good bread. The open plan kitchens had five chefs beavering away and plating up on the pass just behind us. Every so often we were treated to a waft of frying fish skins to add to the atmosphere. All we needed was some ketchup and a bottle of vinegar on the bare tables and we could have been in the local chippie.

My duck breast was tender and the accompaniments tasty, served with an oversized portion of peas to fill the plate, I felt in need of some honey\*. Unfortunately my confit leg seemed to have done a runner but I was offered extra sauce in a jug. The other half pronounced the monk fish tough and tasteless, with an insipid sauce. When I told him it was his fault for choosing it, he said, that the chef has a one rating (the top) in Hardens so he had ordered it to see just how good he is, now he knows. I was reminded of a quote I had seen a while back from a well known restaurant critic, 'the monk fish was as tough as Madonna's thigh'!

We then made another fatal mistake - we ordered dessert. Inadvertently the young waitress laid the spoon and fork the wrong way round and was reprimanded by the head waiter who then made a note in his black book. How many marks, I wonder, before she is out?

My 'Michel Cluizel white chocolate ganache, amaretti biscuit, amalfi lemon and olive oil jelly with lemon thyme sherbet', consisted of a few squirts of white chocolate ganache (bought in from Paris chocolatier Michel Cluizel, I presume) interspersed with a soft amaretti sponge with a slick of lemon sauce and some very acid lemon sherbet with no identifiable hint of thyme. Our daughter at the age of five, would have made a much more artistic presentation.

A blackcurrant almond crumble soufflé was served with a lemon verbena ice cream. The top crust of the soufflé was light and very good with the lovely ice cream but when that was gone the remaining soufflé in the bottom of the dish was just a stodge.

There were four other diners from the SKI (spending the kids inheritance) set, a French couple and a pair of young bucks who ordered the tasting menu with the wine flight as 'mummy is paying'.

We paid £90 for two courses and two glasses of wine including service. They wanted £4 a cup plus 12½% service for coffee so we went home.

They have survived for several years but one wonders if there will be enough bankers and city traders left to keep them going much longer.

"I eat my peas with honey,  
I've done it all my life,  
it makes my peas taste funny,  
but it keeps them on my knife"  
*Anon.*



Peas with honey on a knife courtesy of Bob Cross of Colorado USA. Visit <http://bobcrossphotos.zenfolio.com/> for more of Bob's stunning images

# The Pony & Trap

Knowle Hill,  
Chew Magna,  
Bristol,  
BS40 8TQ  
01275 332627



Josh Eggleton

**S**et in the rolling Somerset countryside, ten miles south of Bristol, The Pony & Trap has been building a reputation for good food over the past few years. Taken over by the Eggleton family in March 2006 the pub, with Josh Eggleton at the helm, has become one of the top rated pubs in the South West. Josh's Head Chef Alex Eggington has worked with him for over 3 years now and in January 2011 the restaurant was awarded a Michelin Star and this was retained in 2012.

We had read some good reports of this friendly hostelry on the food and wine blog site 'e gullet' so when visiting Bristol decided to find a B&B in the area and give it a try.

Before taking over The Pony & Trap Josh had travelled widely. He commenced his culinary career at the age of 15 in his local chippy. Realising he had a passion for food, at 17 he began working in a local Chew Magna pub, then in 2003, the young chef triumphed in the Gordon Ramsay College Scholar competition. Following his success in this much coveted competition, Josh spent time developing his craft in Bristol's harbourside restaurant the Olive Shed. After 2 years as Head Chef, he embarked on a journey that took him across the globe. He experienced working with the best chefs in some of the world's finest restaurants including Sicily's il Mulinazzo, in New York, Chanterelle and the 3 Michelin starred French Laundry of California. After a 3 month spell taking in the cuisines of Italy, France and the USA, Josh turned down a number of job offers determined to return home and set up a restaurant of his own. With the backing of his mother, Josh at the age of 22, became one of the youngest pub and restaurant proprietors in the country. With Hollie Eggleton keeping a sharp eye on things as Front of House Manager and other members of the Eggleton clan including mum Gail. Not only does she do all the administration and bookwork, but Gail can often be found washing up or serving in the restaurant when things get frantic.

This 200 year old pub is a warren of small rooms each with its distinctive style. We dined in the lower dining room which has a large picture window overlooking the Somerset countryside.





We started with a glass of Prosecco accompanied by delicious hors d'oeuvres, spoons filled with various tasty nibbles of pickled vegetables, crab with roasted garlic and saffron mayonnaise, with a beautiful balance of flavours. Great, a chef with a good palate.

An amuse bouche arrived in a small glass, a hot Crab Bisque with olive oil. It was silky smooth and

delicious with just the right balance of seasoning, not too strong.

A plate of home cured Gravlax came with pickled cauliflower and a Pickled Cucumber Sorbet. A lovely combination though I could have eaten more of the sorbet with the huge pile of superb salmon.

Our main course of pressed breast of lamb was the only disappointment of the evening. The accompaniments of crispy sweetbreads and lambs liver served with aubergine and pine nut pesto were very good but the actual lamb was stringy and had little flavour, the first and only lapse in an otherwise superb meal. The saving factor was the perfectly cooked vegetables and a delicious, plentiful sauce, which we mopped up with the excellent home made bread. Not the usual unidentifiable dribs and drabs of sauce - very non Michelin style - well done Josh.

A palate cleanser of an apple sorbet was followed by peanut butter mousse with a dark chocolate layer cake with gingerbread, gingerbread ice-cream and a sesame tuille. Once again a combination made in heaven.

My partner enjoyed a spiced crème brûlée served with, granola in a little pot, and apple sorbet. A smooth creamy brûlée with a lovely texture change in the granola and the richness cut by the sorbet.

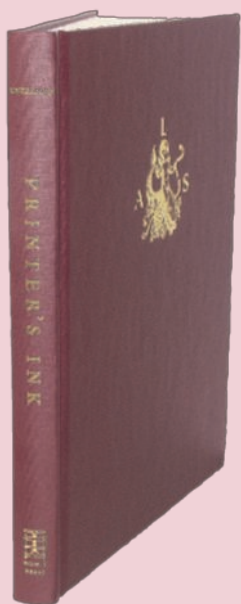
Good strong, hot coffee was served with two types of petit fours a yummy chocolate flapjack and extremely wobbly piece of lemon jelly.

After our Prosecco Extra Dry, Fantinel, we ordered a glass each of Oben Grove Riesling-Gewürztraminer 2010 from Germany, which went well with our salmon. With the lamb we tried a glass of Mill Cellars Shiraz 2011 - South Eastern Australia and a glass of Rare Vineyards Malbec 2010,

Pays d'Oc - France. Both very enjoyable, good quality wines. With dessert we ordered one glass Triana Pedro Ximenez, Hidalgo Sherry NV, which was the pinnacle of a truly gourmet evening.

Service was attentive and friendly generating a very pleasant dining atmosphere. As Michelin would say a restaurant 'worth seeking out'. But hurry, you need to book as it is getting very busy and if the TV people get their claws into Josh he will be lost to Somerset for good. The most incredible part of the whole experience was the value for money - all for under £100 for two, for dinner, including service!





# *A Vintage Bibliophilic Journey*

## *Printer's Ink: A Bibliographic Remembrance of*

### *André L. Simon and His Written Works*

by Gail Unzelman

**F**riends of good food, wine and the “art of good living” know and cherish the books of André L. Simon (1877–1970), wine’s most prolific writer and its greatest bibliophile. He amassed a well-documented, unsurpassed collection of antiquarian books and pamphlets on wine and gastronomy which he often referenced when writing his own bounteous contributions to the grand literature of wine and food, some 150 titles: scholarly; chatty & reminiscent of wines, dinners, & friends; guides to the wines of the world; encyclopedias and dictionaries of both wine and gastronomy; sumptuous, oversized photographic books; small educational pamphlets; two autobiographies—his pen was all-embracing. He compiled three of the most valued bibliographies on the subject of wine and gastronomy, *Bibliotheca Bacchica*, *Bibliotheca Vinaria* and *Bibliotheca Gastronomica*, while his early 20<sup>th</sup> century *magnum opus*, the three-volume *History of the Wine Trade in England*, is one of the most desired and scarcest of wine titles in the English language.

For nearly five decades, I have been collecting and studying the literature of wine, and have taken great pleasure in building a library of some 4,000 vinous books and pamphlets, in all languages, from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the twenty-first. In 1990 it was an exciting honor to help found the Wayward Tendrils-A Wine Book Collectors Society, and serve as Editor of our Quarterly journal. We are in our 22<sup>nd</sup> year, and have tendrily connected fellow vinous-bibliophiles from around the world! If there are Food & Wine readers who have an interest in wine books, their history, or their authors, please visit [www.waywardtendrils.com](http://www.waywardtendrils.com).

From the earliest days of searching-out books on wine, I was enamored with André Simon’s extensive writings in Wine and Food (the quarterly journal of the Wine & Food Society, founded by Simon in 1933), and his monumental list of published gastronomical works. His three *bibliothecas*, *Vinaria*, *Bacchica*, and *Gastronomica* were treasured volumes of the growing Unzelman Library, and always at hand for reference and guidance. In 1990 these typographic masterpieces became the subject of my first published work on wine—the inaugural publication from my newly established Nomis Press—*Wine & Gastronomy: A New Short-Title Bibliography Guide based on the André L. Simon Bibliothecas Vinaria, Gastronomica, & Bacchica* (Santa Rosa, CA: Nomis Press, 1990). (If one is clever, one can see the inspiration for the name of my press!) Our esteemed M. Simon obviously knew his library and its titles like a loved, familiar old Claret, but his bibliographic listing of them was truly frustrating, especially *Vinaria*, the most

referred-to guide in the wine book world. I found it my duty—in honor of M. Simon, and for my fellow wine book lovers—to combine all three bibliographies into one volume, cross-referenced by author, short-title, and date of publication: there should never be another inaccurate case of “Not in Simon – Rare!” enhancing a bookseller’s listing.

*Wine & Gastronomy* included a Check List of Simon’s published works on wine and food, gathered from available sources at the time. Now, after a long and delicious 10-year journey—with forays to the Guildhall and the British Library; a most memorable and invaluable visit with André Simon’s granddaughter; countless inquiries and exchanges with fellow Wayward Tendrils; extensive searches of book dealers’ catalogues; and three very large 3-ring binders of notes—we have come full circle, with another bibliographic tribute to André Simon, this one to include the handful of his non-gastronomic works (written in the main during his WWI service and personally for family). The title, *Printer’s Ink: A Bibliographic Remembrance of André L. Simon and His Written Works*, is taken from Simon’s first book, *The History of the Champagne Trade in England*, written in 1905 “for the love of printer’s ink.” I have chosen to present this bibliographic record of Simon’s works more in the fashion of a biographical remembrance—when, and why, and how, and who—rather than a strict bibliographical listing of the books and their contents, although this information heads each entry.

As is well known, André Simon was a prolific writer and crusader in the cause of “the art of good living,” with over one hundred and fifty acknowledged books and pamphlets. I found his circle of friends in this exemplary endeavor remarkable: be they renowned publishers, printers, artists, illustrators, literary figures, or fellow wine lovers and gastronomes—he knew and called on them all. Their celebrated talents are represented throughout his publications, which are now brought to the forefront, and richly illustrated in this special bibliographic remembrance.

In presenting this new look at an old subject, I hope the readers, researchers, and students of André Simon will find *Printer’s Ink* a worthy and pleasing companion. Typographically, it is a strikingly handsome book that is a pleasure to browse; but it also serves notably as a comprehensive, detailed and invaluable bibliographic reference for the works of André Simon.

Arranged chronologically by publication date, with an alphabetical title-listing for cross reference, each title is given its own page and almost all of the entries are illustrated with a color photograph. Richly bound in claret cloth decorated in gilt, the edition is limited to 200 hand-numbered, signed copies. 194 pp. 10"x7". Available from the author at [nomispress.com](http://nomispress.com). \$125. Please add \$10 for international shipping from the USA. ★