



Food & Wine

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

Issue 128

March 2017

**EDINBURGH FESTIVAL:
A SCOTTISH EXPERIENCE**

**DINNER AT RESTAURANT
MARTIN WISHART**

ANDRÉ SIMON LECTURE

**NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE:
A GREAT WEEKEND**

Chairman's message

A Happy New Year to all, and I hope you get to all the meetings and events in the new calendar, both local and international. My wife Chris has just completed the major part of her treatment for cancer which occurred last year, and which curtailed all our overseas travelling in 2016. She is looking forward to making up for it this year; thanks to all those who have been supportive and sent good wishes.

This is a busy time of year for Chris and I, as we are volunteers for other groups such as CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale), where we help organise and run several large Beer and Cider festivals, and plan and participate in walks for several walking groups in the Ribble Valley spread over Lancashire and Yorkshire. With the cold and inclement weather in the UK it was nice to be inside, preparing over 700 beers and ciders for the 15,000 delegates who attended the Manchester Central Exhibition Centre (GMEX) over three days last week. Real Ale and Craft beers are in the ascendency with many discerning customers. Matching speciality beers with food is becoming ever more popular at some top restaurants.

People have so many choices these days that we have to work ever harder recruiting members to our society, but sampling wine and food in the surroundings of beautiful vineyards, with knowledgeable people, takes some beating.

On returning home I noticed how quickly signs of new life are appearing in the garden, despite the cold. In the vegetable garden the rhubarb is already showing new growth and is ready for forcing. The taste of fresh rhubarb is one of my favourites, and is the harbinger of the new season's food crops.

News on branches is that Capital Branch (Chair, Pam Brunning) has merged with Surrey Hills (Chair, Helen Mills) and pooled their resources. These branches already held joint events together and we wish their members a successful future. On 3rd February several EAZ Committee Members are going out to the Inaugural Dinner of a new Valencia Branch in Spain, to present their Provisional Charter. Set-up by a young London Branch



member, who has returned to work in Valencia, they already have gathered 25+ members. We will wish them well, and look forward to future visits.

It is with sadness that we learnt of the passing of Ian Rushton after a short illness. Several of our committee, past and present, and other branch members attended his funeral, and gave our condolences to his wife Anita and family. As well as serving as your Treasurer, and Chairman for six years, Ian and Anita were stalwart supporters of many of our events. He was generous with wines from his cellar, always good company, and he will be sadly missed by many.

Can I remind you that we are still looking for a member to assist John Nicholas with his treasurer's duties. If you can spare some time please contact John, johnsnicholas@aol.com, and discuss how you might help.

Ian Nicol
Chair, EAZ and International Council of Management

Cover photo: View over Edinburgh from Carlton Hill with the iconic Dugald Stewart Monument in the foreground.

The Society was formed on 20th October 1933 in London by wine writer André L Simon and bibliophile A. J. Symons. Within a month there were 230 members. Today there are over 6,000 in 139 branches worldwide.

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

In André's words,

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



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

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

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



Editorial

With the festivities of 2016 long behind us, members have lost no time in enjoying, learning, and consolidating their experience of food and wine (successful pairings or not!) as portrayed in the numerous reports from branches.

Members of the Northampton Branch tried their hand at guessing the provenance (Old World/New World) of two wines served with each course at Hambleton Hall, while Zurich Branch celebrated their 10th anniversary with a blind tasting of Pinot Noirs, followed by a meal of shared platters.

Merseyside/Mid Cheshire had a tutored tasting of lesser known wines from southern France and Surrey Hills investigated a range of Chilean wines, aged and more recent, presented by Bernard Lamb. Bernard also led a tasting of English wines for London Branch, showcasing the breadth and quality that is now available from our own producers. He even sneaked in two wines of his own making... London Branch also held a tasting of Napa Valley wines at Michelin-starred Pied-à-Terre, led by Jack Rubyn of Marin County Branch in the US. In addition, Marin County Branch very kindly donated some of the wines for the event. Berkshire members celebrated their 400th meeting at the Waterside Inn, Bray. Prior to their meal, Chairman Colin Mair offered a musical prelude, playing the organ of a local church.

Bath and Bristol Branch revisited The Three Gables restaurant in Bradford-on-Avon in order to present them with an IWFS Award. This provided the opportunity for Sicilian manager Vito Scaduto to showcase some of his homeland's wines from the Mount Etna area.

Ian Nicol, Ron Barker and David Chapman have sent through their reports on the Edinburgh Festival which took place last September, and which was very well attended – the group photo will provide a lasting memory for many. The festival included events as diverse as a ship tour, a visit to an ecological pig farm and ('noblesse oblige') a meal in a superlative restaurant... The André Simon lecture "The Scottish Wine Trade" was researched and presented by Zubair Mohamed of wine merchants Raeburn Fine Wines in the historic Leith Old Vaults: power, intrigue, smugglers and wine – history provides it all!

Andrea Warren was also busy in the intervening time and attended the weekend festival hosted by the Niagara Branch in Canada, back in October. Ice-wines being my favourite, I was 'drooling at the chops' while reading her report: a wonderful experience for all who attended.

This year the EAZ Annual General Meeting and Annual Branch Representatives Meeting are being held in London in September. All are encouraged to attend and have a say. The meetings will be followed by a black tie dinner on HQS Wellington (details and timings on page 38).

Concern about the age (or numbers) of our membership continues to rumble on, a concern shared by most branch chairs and all members who have been with the Society for a long time... In this vein, James Muir suggests that past issues of the magazine could be used to 'tempt' new recruits (see Letters to the Editor). Branch members could also pinpoint local events (annual fairs? craft events?) that could provide a platform to distribute information about the Society...

On a separate 'reading' note, should you wish to add to your collection of food and wine books, look no further than the two that scooped Decanter's André Simon 2016 Book Awards in January. The award for wine writing went to John Szabo for his 'Volcanic Wines' and Fuschia Dunlop won the food writing award for her book on China's Lower Yangtze region 'Land of Fish and Rice'. Find out more at <http://www.decanter.com/learn/wine-books-latest-reviews/andre-simon-wine-food-book-awards>.

Also in January, a wildfire raged through the Western Cape, hitting the Vergelegen wine estate. The fire caused damage to around 40% of the estate's total land holdings, but damage to the vineyards may not be as high. The historic farmstead, dating to 1700, was not damaged. Our thoughts go out to all estates that are in areas susceptible to wildfires.

Nathalie Rosin

Food & Wine

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

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editor.eaz@iwfs.org

Printed by
All Things Print
Judds Farmhouse
97 London Road
Stanway, Colchester
Essex
CO3 0NY
www.allthingsprint.co.uk

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Contributors



Edinburgh Festival: A Scottish Experience

Ian Nicol has been EAZ Chairman for 4 years and Council member for 3 years. He recently took over the Chair of the Society's International Council of Management from David Felton, with the aim of sharing our knowledge of Wine, Food & Cultures with as many members as possible, either through meetings, events, our publications or our website. Ian and his wife Chris love travelling and searching out new branch

possibilities, and he was keen that EAZ held a festival in Edinburgh.



Dinner at Restaurant Martin Wishart

David Chapman joined the International Wine & Food Society (Manchester Branch) in late 1986 when he found that he had time to spare for evenings out. He

has been a member of the Branch Committee for more years than he wishes to recall and has twice served as Chairman of that Committee, most recently vacating the chair in January 2012 after two years' service.

He has been a member of the Manchester Wine Society, a wine tasting group, since it was founded in the 1970s. In 1993 he became a member of the Commanderie de Bordeaux à Manchester and is also a member of L'Ordre des Coteaux de Champagne.

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The Scottish Wine Trade

Zubair Mohamed runs the family wine business of Raeburn Fine Wines from his base in Edinburgh. He has spent many years in the wine trade and travelled extensively



searching out some of the best wines available. Today he supplies many restaurants and establishments with fine wine throughout the UK, but always returns to his Scottish base in Leith Vaults where he has researched the history and development of the wine trade in Scotland.

Niagara-on-the-Lake: A Great Weekend

Andrea Warren is the International Secretariat for the Society working from the London office at the In & Out Club. She has worked in the wine trade since the early 1990s and has the WSET Diploma. In her early years she worked on the marketing side of the trade and latterly has been involved with Brown Brothers' wines from Australia. Since having a family she has taken on more of a support role and currently, in addition to the IWFS, also works for the Circle of Wine Writers and the Association of Wine Educators.



News from the International Secretariat



Dear EAZ members,

The International Council of Management has held two meetings since the last issue 127 of Food & Wine – one on 13th October in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canada (see my diary of the weekend on pages 15–19) and the other on 24th February in Mumbai, India. Both meetings coincided with festivals being organized by other zones of the Society, which were open to members globally.

In Niagara-on-the-Lake Chairmanship of the International Council of Management, which oversees the direction of the Society as a whole, was transferred from Dave Felton in the Americas to EAZ Chairman, Ian Nicol. Thanks were given to Dave for all his hard work and efforts in promoting the international importance of the Society and meeting as many members from around the world when attending the many festivals scheduled during his term. Dave was awarded the André Simon Gold Medal in recognition of his services and commitment to the Society on an international level.

Many of the initiatives for members were discussed at these meetings:

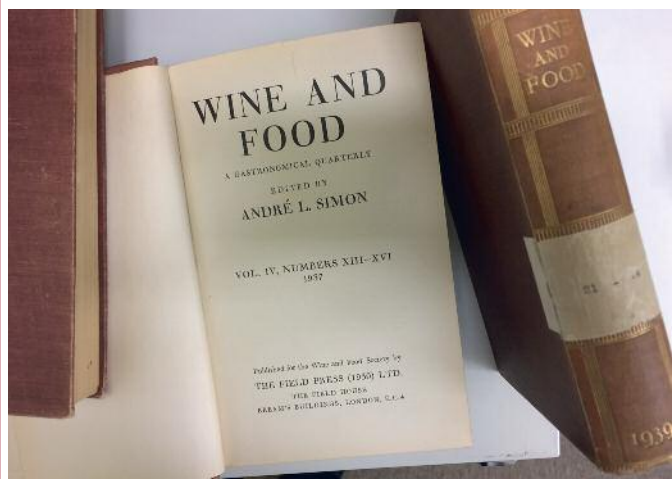
- **IWFS branded Blind Tasting Bottle Kit** – one kit has been posted to each branch. A number of you responded to let me know you were in safe receipt – with thanks and I understand that some of you have already put it to good use, which is welcome news. There are a few still available to purchase (£25.00) if you need more than one kit for your events or if you would like one for your own use. Just send me an email.
- **Branch Directory 2017/18** – we will be producing this again this year and it will be posted to members in May. Please make sure Margaret Chippendale (eazmembership@outlook.com) has the up-to-date information. With all the key branch contacts from around the world, in one booklet, this is an invaluable document to keep to hand when making your travel arrangements. Even if you don't get a chance to meet them face-to-face, the contact in the area may have that 'inside' knowledge and be able to assist you with making a booking at that must-go-to restaurant on your list.
- **Next Monograph** – another title is being finalized now – this time the focus is on the wines of Sonoma. This region comprises many AVAs and can be confusing to some. It is hoped that this will remove some of the mystery about the region but will also provide members with all they will need if planning a trip to Sonoma – details about the key wineries and restaurants and even suggested itineraries. This is due to be published in time for the Americas festival in Sonoma in May. But we hope that it will be useful to those visiting in future and also those who just want to enjoy the wines and would like some informed guidance.
- **Vintage Card App** – members will soon be able to download onto their mobile phone or tablet the latest version of the Vintage Card, so you will be able to see at the tap of a screen which wines to drink when. Details to follow very soon.
- **Society Archives** – we are continuing to build upon these and to set up the link via the IWFS website so that members can

view them. One of the next stages is to assess which branches have material that they feel would be of interest, i.e. past events. How much we can actually load will depend on space and budget but please watch out for details on this in future communications and in the meantime please do find out what you have filed away.

The Society has also featured on television recently. I understand that some of you watched the BBC2 screening of Further Back In Time For Dinner on 14th February. For those who did not catch this it went back to the 1930s and explained how André's vision was to move away from formal dining and encourage people to try different foods in a relaxed environment, in conversation with friends and with wine too. Foods from the Society's inaugural dinner on 14th November 1933 at the Café Royal were included – one being Le Fromage de Munster plus an Alsace wine. Please do watch it on iPlayer if

IN SEARCH OF MISSING BOOK... CAN YOU HELP?

We are seeking a hard-back copy of Wine & Food Nos 1–4, 1934 (similar to those in the photo) plus copies of the paperback issues 44 and 63 of Food & Wine to complete our collection. If you have copies of any of these I would very much like to hear from you on email sec@iwfs.org.



you get the opportunity. If we get the go ahead we will also post the link on the website.

There are a number of initiatives about to come to fruition and we will be in touch shortly, via email or through the online newsletters – as well as in the next issue of Food & Wine.

Until then,

Best wishes
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DECANTER DISCOUNTED MAGAZINE OFFER 2017

Decanter are continuing to offer great savings on their subscriptions for both printed and online versions to IWFS members. Pricing for the printed editions are as follows, go to www.decantersubs.com/IWFS17 to view online prices too, by country.

- **UK Direct Debit Offer:** Pay just £30.95 every 12 months by Direct Debit, saving 50% on the full price of £61.90
 Cheque/Credit/Debit Card Offers 1 year £30.95, saving 50% on the full price of £61.90
 Two year £61.90, saving 50% on the full price of £123.40
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- **US** One Year \$56.90, saving 51% on the full price of \$116.20
 Two Year \$113.85, saving 51% on the full price of \$232.40
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 Two Year £104.05, saving 51% on the full price of £212.40

The contact details are (quote promotion code 12FB):

- **UK:** 0330 333 1113 (Lines are open 7 days a week, 8am–9 pm)
 Calls to 0330 numbers will be charged at no more than a national landline call, and may be included in your phone providers call bundle.
- **Overseas:** +44 (0)330 333 1113 (Lines are open 7 days a week, 8am–9pm, UK time).
- **USA toll free number:** 1 888 313 5528 (lines open Monday to Friday, 7am–13.30pm Central Time) or online via www.decantersubs.com/IWFS17
 See website for global pricing.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Recruiting Members

I don't think we have met but, by way of introduction, I was predecessor to John Nicholas as EAC Treasurer and I've been a committee member and sometime chairman of Herefordshire and Monmouthshire Branch for the last 16 years.

PUBLICATION DATES

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

Like many other branches we have an ageing (this includes me!) and declining active membership and we need to step up recruitment. It has been suggested (not for the first time) that we might encourage potential members to actually pay up and join if we were able to demonstrate the breadth and richness of the range of activities undertaken by our EAZ regional branches. How better to do this than by handing out a back copy of Food & Wine so that they can read all about it themselves?

So my request is to ask whether you have any spare copies (print over-runs perhaps) of back numbers which you could let us have? I recall we did discuss this in one of our EAC meetings back in Pam's reign but I can't remember what, if anything, came out of it. Grateful for your advice and help.

Jim Muir

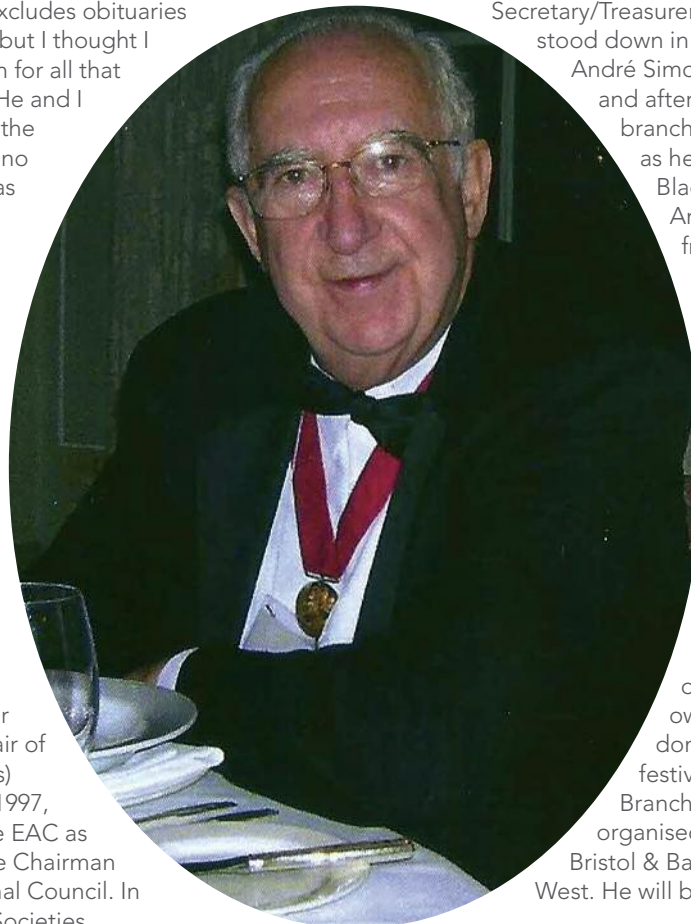
Jim is right in that we should use every means possible to entice new members to join our society. As regards F&W magazines, we do have something like a dozen over-run copies each issue, which Margaret Chippendale usually gives to new members. If any branch would like a few copies for promotional purposes please ask Margaret, (eazmembership@outlook.com). If your branch intends a significant marketing campaign we would be willing to print more copies, and pay for these out of our marketing budget.

Ian Nicol, Chairman

IAN R. RUSHTON: A LIFE IN WINE

I appreciate that current policy excludes obituaries from the pages of our magazine but I thought I must record my own appreciation for all that Ian Rushton did for this Society. He and I spent most of our working life in the Royal Insurance Company which no longer exists but, at that time, was the largest British insurance company. After reading Mathematics at University he joined the Company as an Actuarial Student, but when he qualified, he turned away from Life Insurance and became responsible for 'back office' activities (computers, legal, accounts and personnel). We didn't often see eye to eye; I was the national convenor of the staff unions! But we shared a love of wine and when I formed a Liverpool-based wine circle he was one of the first members.

He left Liverpool for even greater things in London (becoming Chair of the Association of British Insurers) where he also joined IW&FS. In 1997, after his retirement he joined the EAC as Treasurer and in 2001 he became Chairman and a member of the International Council. In 2003 he took on the role of the Societies



Secretary/Treasurer. He kept these positions until he stood down in 2006 when he was awarded the André Simon Silver medal. During this time, and afterwards he visited as many branches, both in the UK and worldwide as he could, and it was at the Blackpool & Fylde Coast's 50th Anniversary that he recognised me from the past and persuaded me to become the first Editor of this Magazine. He kept an apartment in Whitehall and we used to have EAZ Committee meetings in his lounge which is where I first met his wife, Anita who kept the committee going with wine and sandwiches.

The primary task of any office holder is succession planning. He handed the zone over to Chris Bonsall in 2006 but never lost interest in what was going on. He was very generous with his own wine collection and often donated vintage claret to events and festivals. He was a member of London Branch but regularly attended events organised by St James, Herefordshire, Bristol & Bath and the branches in the North West. He will be missed by many members.

Ron Barker

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL: A Scottish Experience

by Ian Nicol



Fifty delegates booked on this Festival from as far and wide as Taipei, Kuala Lumpur, New Orleans, South Africa, Singapore, California, Zurich, New York and the UK. They had come to Edinburgh for many different reasons. Some had worked there, studied medicine, started military service with a regiment there, had relatives or friends there, or planned onward trips to the Western Isles by ship or steam train but all came together to enjoy the three-day experience of the Scottish Capital.

Registration at the Balmoral Hotel provided time to renew old, or make new acquaintances over a relaxing glass of wine or whisky, before assembling later that night for the opening reception and dinner in the Esk Suite. A contemporary take on Scottish favourites like Cullen Skink, Balmoral cured salmon, Haggis, neeps & tatties or Collop of Venison were matched with English, French and Spanish wines paired by David James and Ron Barker. A meal enjoyed by all, followed by a relatively early night in anticipation of an early start, full programme to come, and the effects of jetlag for some.



An early start provided the party with a private tour of the Palace of Holyroodhouse, official residence of Queen Elizabeth II, whilst resident in Scotland. No royals were in residence the day of our visit, which allowed us to visit some of the private rooms, but the day before many royals had been present to wave off the Duchess of Essex on a charity bike ride, 332 miles back to London.

The Palace was built on the site of the ancient Holyrood Abbey – circa 1128 AD – where the monks started importing wine in barrels from France (Scotland being too cold to successfully grow vines). After a tour of the city the party headed for the Leith Vaults, one of the places where wine was imported, auctioned and bottled right up until the 1970s when AOC denomination meant quality wine had to be bottled at source.

Zubair Mohamed of Raeburn Fine Wines, who now own the cellars, welcomed the party there with a glass of Champagne. He later delivered a fascinating André Simon Lecture, tracing back the history of the wine trade in Scotland, which claims to still have access to some of the best claret due to the strong relationship Mary Queen of Scots had with the catholic Kings and Queens of France. A transcript of the lecture can be found later in this issue and on our website, at www.iwfs.org/about/publications/andre-l-simon-lectures. I thanked Zubair on behalf of the Society. The lecture was followed by a wine tasting and lunch in the old wine auction rooms, now a restaurant.

A welcome period of free time was enjoyed before setting off for dinner, at the Michelin starred Martin Wishart Restaurant in Leith. David Chapman's full report appears later in this issue. Next day, Whitmuir Organic Farm provided the ideal venue to hear about the need to protect food production on our planet. The fact that two thirds of our planet is covered by water, and of the remaining third – two thirds is unproductive mountains or desert, leaves just one ninth to grow our food. Intensive farming



guests. The evening was again special to many in the group, and in particular John Nicholas, our treasurer, whose father had been knighted on board when he was British Ambassador in Sri Lanka.

Two members were called up for a surprise presentation of the André Simon Bronze Award. Hans Walter and Philippa Keller were recognised for their dedicated work in helping establish the Zurich Branch and arranging and supporting many events since. Finally a Diploma of Thanks was presented to Ron Barker for organising the event and a small gift presented to both Ron and David for the many hours of work they had put into making such a memorable event. Cathy Kuhlman, New Orleans Branch added her thanks on behalf of the international membership present.

is damaging this, and a tour of the organic farm and its livestock showed there was an alternative way. Linda Ward of Vintage Roots presented an organic wine tasting, which was much enjoyed. Edinburgh Larder, who take much of their produce from the farm, provided a super organic lunch, again accompanied by Linda's wines.

Our Final Festival Dinner, on board the Royal Yacht Britannia, proved to be a highlight event. The delegates were piped aboard by a highland piper and then enjoyed a reception in the State Drawing Room. Camel Valley 'Cornwall' Pinot Noir Rosé Brut, 2012, was the aperitif enjoyed both inside, outside on the deck of the ship, and during a tour of the ship and Royal Quarters, including an on board 'Rolls Royce'. Over 80 society members and guests then gathered in the State Dining Room for a five-course menu accompanied by paired wines, again chosen by David and Ron. I admitted I was humbled to be addressing the company where Kings, Queens, Presidents, Heads of State and other dignitaries had addressed their



DINNER AT RESTAURANT MARTIN WISHART

by *David Chapman*

At the end of a busy Wednesday those attending the Edinburgh Festival boarded their coach outside the Balmoral Hotel to travel through the evening city rush down to Leith, the historic port of Edinburgh, to this eponymous Michelin-starred restaurant with great anticipation. On arrival we were efficiently relieved of our outer wear before being seated with, at our choice, a glass of Prosecco alone or a glass of Prosecco with crème de cassis added so as to mimic a Kir Royale. The restaurant itself was spacious, stylish, well lit and with modern furniture. A choice of breads was quickly offered along with a glass of water and an amuse bouche whilst we settled ourselves and considered the printed tasting menu and paired wine selection.

Our first course was a joy for the eye even before it was tasted. The main player was a langoustine encircled by crab rolls – the crab being rolled in a cylindrical shape and encased in thinly sliced cooked courgette – small domes of avocado and runner beans which had been puréed then piped through a piping nozzle in the form of a spiral shape. Each element was perfectly cooked; individually delicious but also great partners for each other. To accompany this dish was served a 2010 Savennières, Trie Spéciale, from Domaine des Baumard, a family estate based in Rochefort-sur-Loire. The wine is made from 100% Chenin Blanc grapes harvested not only by hand but over a period of “tries” or passes through the vineyard with the pickers only picking those grapes which are perfectly ripe on each pass. The wine is only made in the best vintages with a very low yield (20 hl/ha) and, after a cold fermentation, it is allowed to rest on the lees (which adds to the richness in the taste of the wine) for about 9 months before bottling. It not only matched the dish but, for this scribe, it enhanced it.

Next came a dish made with Orkney Scallop and Cèpe served with a warm duck-liver parfait and some crumbled hazelnuts. It



was partnered by 2012 Riesling A.O.C from the estate of Rolly-Gassman located in the village of Rorschwihr, near Ribeauvillé in Alsace. Riesling is a great food wine; it successfully accompanies a wide range of dishes. This example had rich fruit and yet Rolly-Gassmann managed to balance the fruit with a vibrant acidity to form a seductive wine that melted on the palate whilst managing to hide the kerosene aromas which often occur with Riesling wines.

Not yet done with the fruits of the sea, we received Shetland Squid served on a bed of Puy lentils with pieces of Lomo de Bellota and a rouille. The squid had been scored in a diamond pattern before being seared which cause them to curl so they appeared almost tubular atop the dish which was surrounded by a squid-ink sauce in which there was a blob of the yellow rouille to brighten the otherwise black-and-white dish. There was a lot going on here in terms of flavour and so a wine to



match would be a challenge but the challenge was met with a South African Chenin Blanc from the acknowledged masters of that grape – Ken Forrester (Owner and Co-Winemaker) and Martin Meinert (Co-Winemaker). The 2014 FMC (which stands for Forrester, Meinert, Chenin) from Stellenbosch made from old vine grapes wild-fermented in new oak with its notes of apricot, bread and savoury spice was perfect.

We then moved into that Scottish speciality, game, starting with a Ravioli of Borders’ Partridge. The bird had been pre-cooked then the flesh diced to enable installation in the pasta parcel. It was served on a bed of thinly sliced cabbage and the whole dish was dressed with a truffled cream sauce – a delicious combination. The wine paired with this dish was a 2014 Chinon, Domaine de la Noblaie, from the Loire Valley. Made, of course, from 100% Cabernet Franc it was a perfect match with a lovely balance of ripe fruit and acidity. After a period of poor weather during the summer, the vintage was rescued by an Indian summer in October – the only downside being a small crop. The estate picks the grapes by hand and the fermentation and time before bottling all occurs in stainless steel.

Then that flagship of game north of the border – grouse. Our grouse breast was adorned with wild mushrooms and served with caramelized onion and some walnut risotto. The breast was cooked to perfection avoiding any signs of it drying out. Your correspondent was delighted with the chosen wine accompaniment, that icon of the Eastern Mediterranean, Château Musar in the 2001 vintage. A blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault and Carignan, it was still very youthful in

character with no signs of age – indeed the estate red usually needs the best part of 20 years to become fully mature.

Finally to the dessert course, one of Chef Andrew’s signature dishes. This was a square ‘biscuit’ of Spiced Valrhona Chocolate topped with a scoop of orange sorbet itself topped with a cocoa tuile and that whole combination, served in a round white dish, was surrounded by a sauce of Clementine juice. Pretty as a picture and fabulous to eat. The wine selected for this dish was from Hungary – Royal Tokaji, 5 Puttonyos. The description ‘5 Puttonyos’ is a locally used measure of the level of sweetness and quality in the wine with 6 being the very top. It is made principally from a grape grown in this part of Hungary, Furmint. The soils are largely clay with a volcanic substratum. The vines are approx 20 years old. Yields are kept to an extremely low 10 hl/ha – one vine yields approximately just one glass of wine. The meeting of the two rivers Tisza and Bodrog at Tokaj creates a mist similar to the Sauternes area of France which encourages noble rot to affect the dried and shrivelled grapes. Fermentation takes place in large Hungarian oak vessels and the wines must be aged for not less than 3 years before being offered for sale.

The quality of the wine coped really well with the complex combination of ingredients which were not by their nature wine-friendly and was a fine end to a splendid meal which was accompanied by top class service. To serve 48 diners without delays between different tables must have been a great challenge for the staff both those in the kitchen and those front of house but they met that challenge to give us all a splendid evening.



THE SCOTTISH WINE TRADE

by *Zubair Mohamed*

This lecture was delivered at the Edinburgh festival by Zubair Mohamed, General Manager of Raeburn Fine Wines, at the Anfora Wine Bar which is situated above the Leith Old Vaults, the latter being probably the oldest building associated with the wine trade in the UK. Members toured the Vaults and drank Champagne Brut Decelle, NV, Gyéjacquot Frères before moving upstairs to the Wine Bar. As well as receiving the lecture, members enjoyed a tasting of six French wines and a light luncheon.

Let me first acknowledge that I am a businessman; not a historian. The dates, and the facts surrounding them, have been mainly gleaned from a book I recommend to you all: 'Knee Deep in Claret: A Celebration of Wine and Scotland' by Billy Kay with Cailean Maclean. This was first published by Mainstream in 1983 and revised in 1985 and 1994. I am pleased to say that the 1994 edition was launched in the Vaults beneath this very room that you visited earlier this morning.

We are not sure how old the Vaults are but the earliest recorded mention of them is the 12th Century and they were not new then! The general cobwebs and black botrytis growing on the ceiling (*Cladosporium cellare*) are a result of the evaporation of alcohol vapours over the last 800 years. The mould has been chemically analysed by Edinburgh University and the Edinburgh Botanic Gardens who have found that it is identical to the mould growing in the cellars in Bordeaux and in the Medoc.



Zubair Mohamed delivering his lecture

This is the oldest building associated with the wine trade in Leith (even perhaps in the whole of the UK) and for many years it was the business premises of Messrs. J. G. Thomson and Company. This building is known locally as the "Vouts", a name which, in spelling and pronunciation, carries us back to the troubled days of Mary Queen of Scots, when this building seemed to be as gloomy in appearance as it is today, for, as we have already observed downstairs, it was then known as the "Black Vouts". The oldest date marked on the Vaults today is 1682, when the great building, much lower in height at that time than now, was either reconstructed or rebuilt. Messrs. J.G. Thomson began business here in 1785. It was they who raised the Vaults to their present height of three storeys. But this historic building had been associated with the wine trade long years before Messrs. J. G. Thomson's time, as is shown by the richly decorated walls and ceiling of the original office, small in size compared with the present counting-house. The plaster decoration in the older office is very largely symbolic of the wine trade.

To the left of the actual long bar (in the Anfora Wine Bar restaurant, where we are seated) lies a beautiful and historic dining room. Once named 'The Sale Room', this was where the wines of Bordeaux (and from elsewhere) were sampled by the members of the local Guild and purchased if approved. The price was then fixed by the Edinburgh Town Council.

As early as the twelfth century, as we have seen, the mariners of Leith brought wine from abroad for the use of the Abbot and Canons of Holyrood. Holyrood had been an Abbey before it became a Royal Palace. In the days of the early Stuart kings, after Holyrood had become their court, the King's wines all came via Leith. The duties payable by merchants on goods landed at Leith were exceedingly moderate in those times, for we find that in 1477 the duty on a tun (4 Hogsheads or 1,200 litres) of wine was only 1s. 4d. Scots (less than 7% of a modern pound sterling).

The Auld Alliance between Scotland and France might have started as a military alliance but it became synonymous with a long-established friendship founded on the Scots' love of French wine. The first formal treaty between the Scots and the French dates back to 1295, it was formed as a pact against the English (plus ça change?!). But according to historical records, the Auld Alliance could possibly be said to originate in the 8th century (year 777) with a military co-operation between Charlemagne of the Franks and King Accaius of Scotland – to help fight any potential invasions in each other's countries.

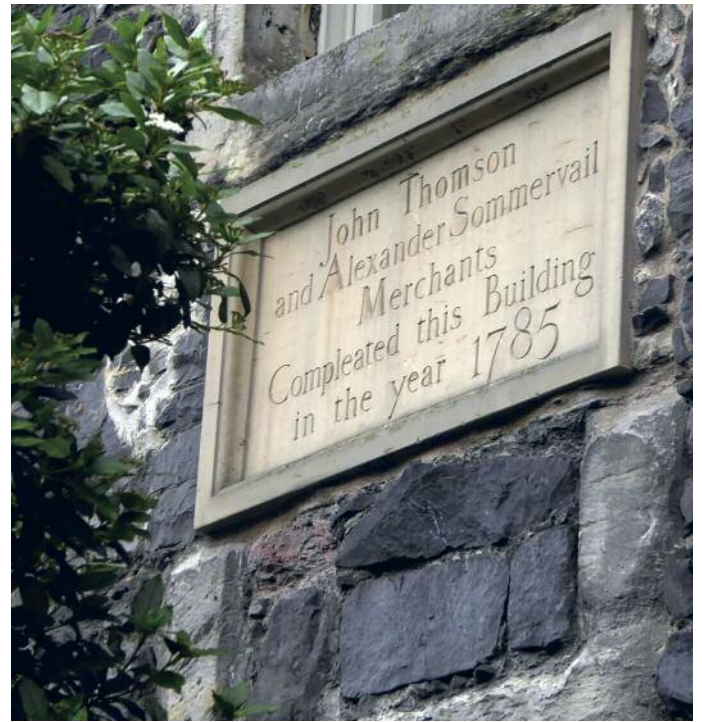
By the end of 13th Century and beginning of the 14th century the main importation into English and Scottish ports was from Bordeaux (an English colony at this time as was the whole region of Gascony) due to the marriage of Eleanor of Aquitaine to Henry Plantagenet in 1152 resulting in three centuries of English rule in South West France and a rule only broken, ironically, by the combined forces of the Auld Alliance in the 1450s.

To summarise a very complicated history, after Robert the Bruce won independence from Edward II's England in 1314, an even closer alliance was formed with the French, to help protect the Scots against the English. And when Joan of Arc finally defeated the English in 1453 a lot of her army had Scottish blood.

Many Scots fought as mercenaries for the French, and in return Scottish merchants were offered privileges, including freedom from Normandy taxes and direct access to vine-growers to select their choice of Bordeaux's finest wines – a privilege which was eagerly protected for hundreds of years, much to the annoyance of English wine drinkers who received an inferior product.

In the days of Mary Queen of Scots (1542–1567), when there was so much coming and going between Scotland and France, claret from France was the chief wine imported into Leith. This trade continued to grow for about two hundred and fifty years until the time of the Napoleonic wars, when wine increased greatly in price owing to the duty imposed on it by the British Government. Sherry from Spain and port from Portugal then began to be imported in increasing quantities.

In those days; and in fact up to and including the 1970 vintage, most wine was imported into the UK in wooden barrels (in "bulk" as it was called) and bottled in England or Scotland. When the wine arrived at Leith it was clarified naturally by the long ageing in barrel and then it was bottled. In many other parts of Leith there were also huge cellars in which were stored, bin after bin, a huge array of wine bottles, each on its side. In this position they lay from ten to fifteen years, their contents slowly maturing. The temperature of these wine cellars remains the same, day after day, and year after year, never naturally really changing due to the excellent storage conditions. So extensive were some of these original vaults that a visitor to one of them, after traversing long avenues of bins, may peer out of a grating into a street a considerable distance away from that at which he entered. Stores representing fortunes lay unsuspected beneath the feet of Leithers as they walked their streets!



This only changed when the French AOC rules specified that quality wine should be bottled where it was made. When England lost control of Bordeaux it was unable to continue to import claret and turned to its oldest ally, Portugal. Portuguese wines were exported from Oporto and grape spirit (brandy) was added to stabilize it for the journey across the Bay of Biscay. The added alcohol stopped the fermentation early and Port was 'invented'.



Leith champagne vaults



The wine trade in Scotland survived the Reformation and the Union of the Parliaments. In England drinking French claret was seen as unpatriotic but during the Jacobite era Scottish nationalists took to claret as opposed to port as a sign of independence. More often than not a blind eye was turned as the wine was smuggled through Leith and rolled up the streets to the New Town. The pillars of Edinburgh society cared not a jot where it came from – they kept drinking it as claret had become part of Scots culture.

Leith became firmly established as one of the busiest wine importing ports from this linkage with Bordeaux and through the centuries Leith-bottled claret earned an international reputation rivaling London and Bristol.

Wherever we may go, we find that the Scots tend to stick together and the mercenaries evolved into a thriving Bordeaux merchant community. Today a single name survives – Nathaniel Johnston et Fils who are located at the heart of the famous Chartrons district, the historic centre of the Bordeaux wine trade and retain strong links with the outlying chateaux of the Gironde. The Johnston's even have a Boulevard named after them!

While fine wine drinking was previously confined to an elite in Scottish society, times have changed and we now enjoy a range of choice that once would not have been believed. Scots have made their mark on the New World wine trade too – Inglenook of California; Robertson of South Africa; Anderson of Rutherglen, South Australia to name but a very few.

Claret still comes ashore, of course now in bottle, and, given the undoubted quality of Bordeaux wine and our historic attachment to it, will surely always take a favored place in Scotland's cellars!

Leith was one of the chief wine-importing ports of the kingdom and housed a large number of wine firms, well known as importers of wines of the finest quality and most of them were long established. For instance, in the old ledgers of Messrs. Bell, Rannie, and Company, who began business in 1715, now

over two centuries ago, are to be found the wine bills run up by Bonnie Prince Charlie for his gay and brilliant assemblies in 'Forty-five times.

The chief wines coming into Leith in the past were claret from Bordeaux, Burgundy and Champagne via Dunkirk, Sherry from Cadiz, Port from Oporto, and red wines from Australia. Champagne came already bottled, but the other varieties were, as previously mentioned, usually imported in the cask. The export of whisky from, and the import of wine into Leith, has given it a large trade in coopering. In his *Bride of Lammermoor*, Sir Walter Scott speaks of "Peter Puncheon that was cooper to the queen's stores at the Timmer Burse [that is, Timber Bush] at Leith".

As your Society is one based on fine dining and most of the wine in these Vaults are sold through the restaurant trade I should add a few words about Scottish Gastronomy. Scotland produces some of the finest raw materials for the table that can be found anywhere. Aberdeen Angus beef, grouse, venison and salmon are known around the world, but top quality restaurants did not exist at all until the 1920s and even in the 1970s they were few and far apart. You have to conclude that the Puritan ethos lingered north of the border far longer than it did in England.

In fact the first quality restaurant in Scotland was created by an Englishman! Arthur Towle was the son of Sir William Towle who was the creator of the great railway hotels that started to appear in England towards the end of the 19th Century. Arthur followed his father into the Midland and Scottish Railway Company and was influential in opening the renowned Gleneagles Hotel in June 1924. It included the first French restaurant in Scotland. Towle's second French restaurant in Scotland was the Malmaison at the Central Hotel in Glasgow which opened in 1927. I should also mention William Heptinstall (after whom the annual Chefs awards are named). In 1929 he opened a hotel in the Highlands some miles from the nearest railway station but André Simon in 1945 expressed the opinion that there was no better food to be found in Britain than at Heptinstall's hotel at Fortingall. Time has moved on and Scotland now has 13 Michelin starred restaurants of which four are located in Edinburgh.



NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE: A Great Weekend

by *Andrea Warren*

In October over 100 IW&FS members headed to Niagara-on-the-Lake for what was a superb weekend, hosted by the Niagara Branch. Brian Findlay, past president and current cellar master of the branch had the vision for this weekend and even began laying down wines as soon as the date was set, two years previously – giving you an idea of the attention to detail put into this weekend.

The itinerary for the weekend offered the members a great chance to learn about the town's history and be part of the local food and wine scene. Being the largest planted area for vines in Canada, and also having similar cool climate growing conditions as in Burgundy, the Niagara Peninsula was an ideal window on the country's wines. Members were also able to take in some of the local culture as the renowned Shaw Festival was still on featuring plays by George Bernard Shaw and those inspired by his work. This year it included *Alice in Wonderland*, *Sweeney Todd*, and Bernard Shaw's *Mrs Warren's Profession*. Plus of course for those who had never visited the region, which included me, a trip to the Falls was a must.

Niagara-on-the-Lake is one of Canada's most historic towns but is also a picturesque, bustling town of around 15,000 people and more when the tourists arrive. I stayed at the Prince of Wales hotel which was smaller than the official Queen's Landing hotel, but its central location meant it was a great place to feel part of the local action for the weekend. The town has been named as the "prettiest town in Ontario" – clearly even the

weekly garden waste collection has to maintain standards, with pristine bags lined up, ready to go!

Lake Ontario, the shores of which the town sits on, is the smallest of the great lakes but is very deep which means it never freezes. This has an influence on the region's weather and ultimately the grapes grown, as well as the style and quality of the wines. Walking along the shore line the huge expanse of the lake stretches as far as the eye can see, dotted with many sailing boats in the distance.

Niagara-on-the-Lake is one of the two viticultural regions of the Niagara Peninsula, *Niagara Escarpment* being the other; there are 10 sub-appellations. During the weekend we sampled wines from 14 wineries from a number of different appellations giving us a good overview as to which grapes did best where.

The opening dinner for half of the group was at the *Benchmark* restaurant at the *Niagara College*. The college was first opened in 2000 and the restaurant "showcases the food, wine and beer created, prepared and presented by the students". Our dinner was a triumph with the students putting their skills to the test serving dishes packed with ingredients offering flavours, and nutrition, in abundance. The college clearly nurtures the skill and enthusiasm of its students many of whom have then moved on to progress with their career. Over the weekend we were to be impressed by the dishes of no less than three of their graduates.



Lake Ontario

We were served classic varietal wines to match the food, bottled under the Niagara College label and, in the main, from the Dean's List selection. One of my favourites was the Meritage, 50% Cabernet Franc, then split between Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. The Niagara Branch is a great supporter of the work of the college and has made donations, through a scholarship fund from members, over the years. During the evening Brian Findlay presented a cheque for \$1800 from the IWFS Americas Foundation for a second Winery & Viticulture scholarship this year to Wendy Dueck, Director of Development.

Benchmark Restaurant at Niagara College

- Nova Scotia Salmon with Ontario Asparagus & Peas
Inland farmed Atlantic salmon slow poached, asparagus foam, green asparagus ribbons and points, peas, pea sprouts, pea purée, sourdough tuile
2012 Niagara College Sauvignon Blanc
- Warm Mushroom Tart with New Farm organic baby arugula salad, bacon wafer & verjus vinaigrette
2010 Niagara College Dean's List Chardonnay
2010 Niagara College Dean's List Pinot Noir
- Slow Roasted Grass-fed Angus Striploin Steak
Pommes Kennedy, caramelized onion, glazed garden vegetables, Black Oyster mushrooms, sauce Bordelaise, brown butter Hollandaise
2010 Niagara College Dean's List Meritage
- Quartet of Apple Tart, Sorbet, Mousse, Beignet
2010 Niagara College Dean's List Cabernet France Ice-wine
- Coffee or Tea

Day 1: Niagara-on-the-Lake Wineries

Day one involved three visits to wineries in the *Niagara-on-the-Lake* appellation.

Our first visit was to *Stratus* – a striking winery with its contemporary design, cedar-clad walls and lots of glass to allow the natural light to flood in such that the staff can feel connectivity with the vineyards planted on the lakeshore plains. Wishing to have a gravity driven winery meant they had to build it, which must have been quite an investment in itself, but the juice can free fall to the cellar reducing the addition of unwanted oxygen in the process. All the hard work paid off, as it was the first winery to be fully LEED certified (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design).



Dessert at Benchmark

Their winemaker J-L Groux, one of Niagara's winemaking pioneers, who came from the Loire and brought the Old World practice of assemblage to the New World, walked us outside to the vineyards. He has experimented with a number of different varieties – Mourvèdre didn't work so they have now grafted Cabernet Franc on top, which works well whereas Cabernet Sauvignon can be inconsistent as it has difficulty ripening. The warming effects of the nearby lake mean that they can often wait until mid-December to harvest which is quite unique to the area. They grow 10 red varieties including Tannat and Tempranillo and six whites such as Chardonnay and Gewürztraminer. Growing a number of different varieties allows J-L to practice assemblage. We tasted their flagship *Stratus White* and *Red* wines which are a blend of a number of varieties. Made to last, and complexity being their focus, they are very much food wines. The 2008 red was quite light on the palate whereas 2012 was a warmer year so it packed a greater punch with delicious rich fruit and stronger tannins.

Further inland but still in the *Niagara-on-the-Lake* appellation we enjoyed a tasting of the wines from *Southbrook Vineyards*. This is the first biodynamic winery in Canada offering classic Bordeaux blend wines from Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Merlot. Ann Sperling, the winemaker, also produces an *Orange Wine* which was popular among tasters. It is, unsurprisingly, orange in colour (from fermentation and maceration on the skins) and slightly cloudy due to the lees in the bottle. Made from 100% Vidal this has a powerful nose of tangerine and marmalade suggesting it might be sweet but it is bone-dry which came as a surprise. Members were treated to four wines paired with either cheeses (from the Montfort artisan winery) or locally sourced meats. Two of the wines were from their Estate range, 2012 Estate Wild Ferment Chardonnay and 2013 Estate Cabernet Franc '101' (which offer glimpses of the effect of barrels on the wine) and then two from their Poetic range which are only made in great vintages. Such is the commitment of owners Marilyn and Bill Redelmeier to sustainability and to being "green", that their 150-acre property is certified organic – this also includes their hay and sheep!

Lunch that day was at the multi-award winning *Jackson-Triggs* winery in a large marquee next to the vineyards. The winery is named after its founders Allan Jackson and Don Triggs who both met when they worked for Labatt's and then decided to switch from producing Canadian beer to Canadian wine. They established the winery in 1993 with their first vintage being produced in 1999. They have 17 acres under vine here focussing mainly on the cool climate varieties Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Riesling with other classic variety plantings too such as Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Gewürztraminer and Sauvignon Blanc. The region has a continental climate with Lake Ontario having a warming and cooling influence. Being on a similar latitude to Burgundy this is a cool climate region illustrating why they, and other Niagara wineries, are able to grow many of the classic varietals.

Before lunch we had a tasting of three ice-wines served with three canapé bites. Ice-wine with salmon was a delicious combination with both offering a richness of flavour, the second was a classic pairing with an Ontario blue (from Thornloe Cheese) and then an almond toasted biscuit topped with pumpkin custard and seeds, which worked very well together. The cool winter temperatures are needed to make the region's famous ice-wine. The VQA rules state that the temperature needs to reach -8°C and the earliest the grapes can be picked is 3rd December until 2nd March. Three consecutive days of these



Food and wine tasting at Southbrook

temperatures are needed to freeze the water in the grapes naturally on the vine. Bruce Nicholson, senior winemaker for the group, chooses to pick the grapes at -10°C to obtain, in his view, optimum balance between natural sweetness and acidity.

Riesling is the traditional grape as it is naturally high in acidity however 80% of ice-wine in Canada is made from Vidal, from which the first Canadian ice-wine was made.

Our chef, Tim Mackiddle, a graduate from the Niagara College culinary programme, prepared us a lunch to match the season. There was an autumn nip in the air so the lamb cassoulet was a warm welcome – it had been braised for 14hrs with a tomato based sauce and was served with caramelised vegetables, including kale grown on site, giving a robust dish.

Dinner that evening was at LIV at White Oaks Resort & Spa which maintains the region's focus on seasonal and locally grown produce and on setting high standards. We enjoyed a six-course meal with dishes such as the Arctic Char coming from a local farmer and the tomatillos for the purée were grown on his sister's farm.

We tasted a range of wines from four producers – two wines from adjacent wineries *Thirty Bench* and *Hidden Bench* both on the *Beamsville Bench*, which is a tiny sub-appellation on a narrow plateau sloping away north from the escarpment. It is also the closest to Lake Ontario. This provides cooler nights and extends the growing season into the Fall. Western sun exposure provides more sunshine. It is one of the few areas in the Niagara vine-growing region where grapes are planted on a steep slope. The excellent air and water drainage, longer growing season and riper grapes all play a part in this being a superior winegrowing region on the *Niagara Escarpment*. These unique conditions provide a natural complexity to the wines, make some more voluptuous and even give a smoky character. The cooler climate here is better for Pinot Noir, Gamay, Chardonnay and Gerwüztraminer.

The area is famous for its Riesling and the 2012 Wood Post from *Thirty Bench* offered delicious fruit and acid balance. Earlier in the day J-L Groux (winemaker at Stratus) had mentioned that he

felt Niagara was getting too hot for Riesling but Brian felt that this wine demonstrated that the grape “shuts down” so it does not over-ripen. *Hidden Bench* is an artisanal winery with low yield organic practices, employing geothermal technology to control cellar and wine process temperatures and the only winery to generate its own electricity through 105 solar panels. The ancient limestone rich glacial moraine soils of *Beamsville Bench* enable the team to craft complex wines. The 2011 Nuit Blanche is made from 95% Sauvignon Blanc, a grape variety which is only grown by a few in Niagara. 2011 was a cool year so was a good vintage for white wines. 2010 was a hot vintage which allowed the Cabernets to ripen into November, giving delicious ripe fruit flavours.

The next wine was from *Kacaba*, which is owned by a Toronto Bay Street lawyer (Canada's Wall Street) who realised what a great place *Vineland* in the *Niagara Escarpment* is to grow grapes. Their focus is on rich aromas, deep colour and velvety finishes fermenting in small tanks to increase intensity and concentration. It is a small batch winery employing careful handling and picking and making wines to last. 2007 was another hot vintage giving their Réserve Cabernet Franc a richness and warmth on the palate.

Featherstone, on *Twenty Mile Bench* in the *Niagara Escarpment* is a small family owned, one couple, winery where they have sheep in the vineyards to eat the lower canopy leaves to provide more light for the vines and the grapes. We enjoyed their 2011 Late Harvest Cabernet Franc which cannot be called an ice-wine as the grapes are picked at -6°C ; however their sugar intensity is lower, offering a deliciously light and delicate wine. They are also owners of some of the oldest vineyards of Riesling planted in 1978.



Vidal grapes, those on the right are ready for ice wine!

LIV at White Oaks Resort & Spa

First course

- Seared Digby Scallop, thyme infused butter poached king crab, roasted tomatillo purée, avocado and cilantro
Thirty Bench "Wood Post" Riesling 2012

Second course

- Pan roasted Arctic Char, ginger and lemongrass scented beurre blanc, scallion pancake
Hidden Bench Nuit Blanche, Semillon Sauvignon Blanc 2011

Third course

- Maple brined and smoked Muscovy Duck breast, roast parsnip, Saskatoon berry compote
Hidden Bench Terroir Caché, Cabernet Merlot 2010

Fourth course

- Dark mustard encrusted Ontario Lamb, house cured pork belly, field mushroom and bean ragout
Kacaba Reserve Cabernet Franc 2007

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Fifth course

- Featherstone Select Late Harvest Cabernet Franc 2011

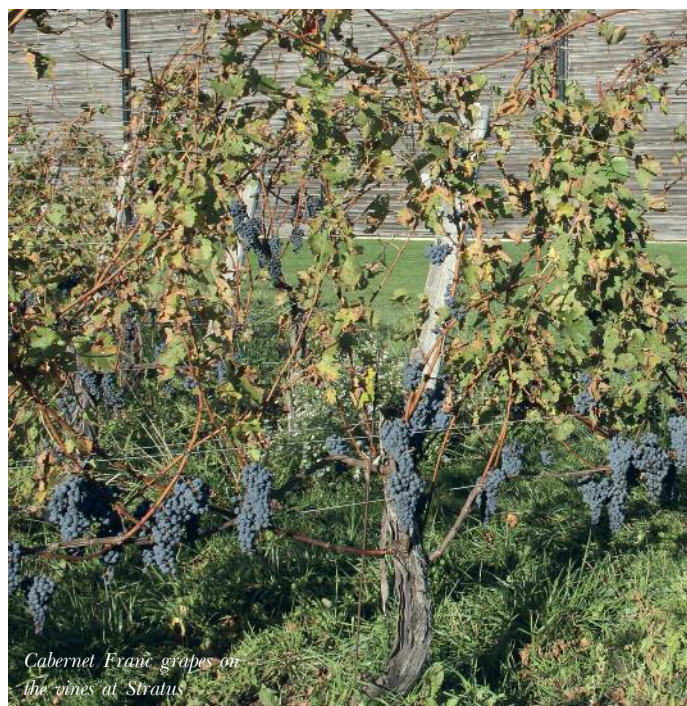
Sixth course

- Red wine poached Niagara Pear, blue cheese cream, candied pecans, lavender infused honey

Day 2: Niagara Escarpment Wineries

On day two we ventured off to the *Niagara Escarpment* appellation, the region from where we had enjoyed wines the night before. We had two wine and food matching sessions at the delightful Inn On The Twenty restaurant, situated in Twenty Valley in the beautiful Jordan village.

Wines from the *Malivoire* winery were the first wines we tasted – producing top wines from four sub-appellations of the *Niagara Escarpment*. One of these is Stouck Vineyard which is a significant eight hectare plot of particular interest to Malivoire as it is warmer and is more suited to the late ripening varieties Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.



Cabernet Franc grapes on the vines at Stratus

Martin Malivoire presented three of his wines carefully paired with cheese from local specialist – Cheesy Guys. Two were cooler climate wines – 2012 Moira Chardonnay and 2012 Courtney Gamay. The third was the 2012 Stouck Cabernet Merlot. The balancing acidity and citrus flavours of the Chardonnay went well with the saltiness and bread flavours of the Niagara Gold – which was made in the local town of Jordan. The Gamay was from a small five acre plot – this bright red wine with cherry and raspberry flavours with soft tannins went well with the spicy, nutty flavours of the Mountain Oak Gouda from New Hamburg. The Cabernet Merlot, having been aged for 13 months in large oak barrels, had delicious pine and liquorice aromas matching well with Balderston Cheddar which was smooth on the palate but with a zing at the end.

Winemaker Angelo Pavan introduced the wines of *Cave Springs* also from the *Niagara Escarpment – Beamsville Bench* which he referred to as the grand cru site in Ontario. We enjoyed five of their wines – three with a range of canapés and then two with lunch. The first wine was a Blanc de Blancs, Brut NV which was toasty and creamy on the palate and had been on the lees for three years. Then followed their Riesling 2014 – 50% of their production is from Riesling grapes producing wines with great acidity and residual sugar providing a number of different styles – the terroir providing the body and texture to their wines.

Angelo took us briefly through how the region had grown in such a short space of time, saying that the quality Canadian wine industry really began in earnest only 25 years ago. This was, in part, due to the Vintners Quality Association (VQA) of Ontario being set up in 1988 and becoming law in 2000. The VQA Ontario is the authority which oversees the industry, setting the framework for the production of wine and also the regions (appellations) where the vines are grown – very similar to the appellation systems in Europe. Today there are over 160 wineries in Ontario. With its continental climate the *Niagara Peninsula* is one of three VQA (Vintners Quality Alliance) regions which guarantees 100% of the grapes are sourced from Ontario.

Lunch and the canapés were prepared under the supervision of Executive Chef at Inn On The Twenty, Jason Williams who is also a graduate from the Niagara College Culinary program.

Inn On The Twenty

- Cider Glazed Chicken Breast
Ratatouille of seasonal vegetables, roasted garlic, rösti potato & thyme jus
2011 CSV Chardonnay
- Pumpkin Crème Brulée
With a Riesling ice-wine butter tart
Indian Summer Late Harvest Riesling

After an afternoon where members could enjoy time off to do some shopping or just relax at their hotel, they then dressed for the weekend's closing gala dinner at the Queen's Landing Hotel.

The extensive six course dinner was prepared by Executive Chef Marc Lyons who had also graduated from the Niagara College. He certainly pulled out all the stops and we had a truly wonderful journey through so many tastes and textures. Two wines from the same variety were served with each course giving us the opportunity to taste and to compare the different styles and how each married with the different dishes – Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Syrah. Plus there was one extra course, making seven in total, which was

dedicated to wine only and that was the 2013 Henry of Pelham, Riesling Ice-wine.

There were wines from producers we had not yet tasted which included *Creekside*, based on the *Niagara Escarpment* in Jordan, close to where we had lunch. They are recognised as “non-conformists” with their focus on single varietal wines and their main grape variety being Sauvignon Blanc and also known as leaders in Syrah. These had not been grape varieties that we had tasted much of over the weekend but their 2013 Sauvignon Blanc Réserve stood out with its oaky, toasty flavours making it a very robust, powerful wine. *Bachelor* is a small winery, with cellars also in Burgundy and Oregon, as well as Niagara. Thomas Bachelor is a virtual winemaker making wine in these three classic cool climate regions from Chardonnay and Pinot Noir – giving rise to the Bachelor “3 Terroirs” Project. He works with winemakers along the Bench from St David’s in the east moving west to *Vineland* and *Beamsville*. His 2011 Saunder Chardonnay with its buttery notes went very well with the Chardonnay butter basted, trio of distinctive heirloom cauliflower. Then the last two dry wines we were to taste were from *St David’s Bench*, in *Niagara-on-the-Lake* which, although warmer in October than anywhere else in Niagara, has excellent airflow and drainage allowing elegant wines. *Ravine* estate, which is a fifth generation family farm producing organic wines, produced the 2010 Chardonnay Réserve which was light and delicate and a tasty match with the lobster brain jelly.

The last wine of the weekend was the 2013 *Henry of Pelham*, Riesling Ice-wine. The luscious yet elegant flavours of this wine demonstrate why Canada has become a leader in this style of wine.

Queen’s Landing Gala dinner

Executive chef – Marc Lyons

- Foie Gras Mousse
Quiet Acre sour cherry purée, sous vide Warner’s apple, warm house-baked brioche
2008 *Cave Springs CSV Riesling*
2013 *Hidden Bench, Felseck Vineyard Riesling*
- Textures of Heritage Beets
Goat’s milk gel, Shoot Boss nasturtium, Blyth’s aged goat gouda
2013 *Creekside, Sauvignon Blanc reserve*
2010 *Stratus Sauvignon Blanc / Semillon*
- Cold Water Lobster
Chardonnay butter basted, trio of heirloom cauliflower, lobster brain jelly, Aioli Nero
2011 *Bachelor, Saunders Chardonnay*
2010 *Ravine, Chardonnay Reserve*

AWARDS

Three international awards were presented during the weekend. The retiring Chairman of IW&FS Council, Dave Felton, was awarded the André Simon Gold Medal for his unstinting service to the Society, highlighted by his chairmanship of the International Council since 2014, as well as his leadership of the 2012 Vancouver Festival. Bob Gutenstein (Americas) made the presentation accompanied by Jeff Deeths (Americas), Chris Bonsall (EAZ) and Yvonne Wallis (APZ), all four of whom have previously been awarded the AS Gold medal.



- Crispy Muscovy Ducks Breast
Pristine Farms grain “risotto”, fermented DBL squash, Zephyr Farms sunchoke purée
2012 *Bachelor, Lowrey Pinot Noir*
2010 *Hidden Bench, Locust Lane Pinot Noir*
- Sous Vide Venison Loin
Hillside Farms celeriac fondant, “Marc’s” sautéed forest mushrooms, pan drippings
2010 *Kacaba, Syrah Reserve*
2010 *Jackson-Triggs, Delaine Syrah*

2013 *Henry of Pelham, Riesling Ice-Wine*

Tasting of Niagara Growers Cold Cellar Fruits
Coffee and Tea Service

This was a most memorable weekend and clearly a lot of hard work had gone into making this a success. In all, we tasted over 30 wines from fourteen different wineries and were served delicious and innovative menus and local foods to complement the wines. The passion to produce and serve only the best came across from all we met from the wineries to the restaurants through to the artisan food companies. The high quality and range of wines produced in Ontario was an eye-opener for many. Clearly great strides have been made in recent years with a focus on quality. With this continued focus I am sure that the future is bright for Ontario wines around the world and also for the region itself.

Thanks must go to Brian and his team at the Niagara Branch for a superb and truly great weekend.

Santé

The Americas awarded the André Simon Bronze medal to Antonio Escudero-Viera, a long serving member of the BGA and director of IW&FS Americas Inc.

At the same dinner, past EAC Chairman and International Council Chairman Chris Bonsall was presented with the IW&FS Diploma for his service as Chairman of the IW&FS Wines Committee. Chris fulfilled this important role for the Society from 2009-16, balancing his extensive wine knowledge with the views of wine experts to produce the Society’s annual Vintage Card and Chart.

IWFS AWARDS: The Three Gables



The Bath and Bristol Branch are pleased to have nominated The Three Gables in Bradford-on-Avon for a Restaurant Award, which was presented by Michael Messent, member of the EAZ Executive Committee, at a lunch on 23rd November 2016.

The Three Gables is located in a beautiful historic building on the south bank of the Avon River. This lovely stone building has, over four centuries, seen uses as diverse as a malthouse and brewery, a cycle shop and a sweet shop and bakery. In 2011 it was bought by Howard Booty and converted into a restaurant, managed by Vito Scaduto, whose previous restaurant, Red and White in Trowbridge, had also been a fixture on the IWFS Bath & Bristol calendar. Before that, Vito was Deputy General Manager at the Bath Priory Hotel & Restaurant.

Vito is Sicilian by birth, and passionate about the food and (especially) the wines of his country, as well as those of Italy, Bordeaux, Burgundy and the Rhone. His extensive and eclectic cellar provides interesting and often unusual wines to accompany the accomplished Mediterranean-inspired dishes created in the kitchen. The restaurant has two AA rosettes for culinary excellence and also the AA 'notable wine list' accolade. Vito himself has been awarded the prestigious MCA (Master of Culinary Arts).

The meal which secured the Award took place on Saturday 14th May last year. It was our third visit to The Three Gables and it did not disappoint. Before lunch, Vito had prepared a tasting of wines from the Mt Etna region of Sicily. He explained that grapes have been grown on the slopes of Mt Etna for many years, but in small quantities in steeply terraced vineyards. Many

of the old vines still survive as they were not affected by phylloxera (the louse cannot survive the volcanic conditions), and they have been supplemented in recent years by new plantings, mainly of indigenous grape varieties. We learned that the roots of these vines, grown at high altitudes, extend many metres down into the volcanic rocks below the unforgiving larval soils, and that this accounts for the freshness and minerality of the resulting wines. Of the three wines tasted, most people enjoyed the white (a Carricante from Tasca d'Almerita) and the second red (a Nerello Mascalese) the most, and comparisons were drawn with Chablis and a good Côte d'Or Pinot Noir respectively.

The tasting was followed by a short break on the sunny terrace where we enjoyed a glass of Prosecco Brut Jeio and a selection of canapés and olives.

Back in the restaurant, our lunch, prepared under the direction of Chef Giacomo Carreca (who sadly has since moved on) began with a delicious ravioli of Cornish smoked haddock, resting on beautifully creamed Jerusalem artichoke, with tiny and very tender broad beans and garden peas tucked in all around. It looked – and tasted – wonderful, a superb combination of flavours and textures. It was accompanied by a delicious, classic, aromatic white wine from Tasca d'Almerita's Regaleali estate.

The main course was Wiltshire guinea fowl, tender and succulent accompanied by a mixture of vegetables. It was beautifully presented and very well-flavoured, with the bitterness of the chard cutting through its richness and the wild mushroom contributing an earthy dimension. The Regaleali Rosso was an excellent match and was much enjoyed.

Dessert was a positive symphony! Chocolate, Amarena cherry and apricot – how could it fail? Once again beautifully presented, it was a most satisfying conclusion to the meal, especially as it was accompanied by a quite superb Torcolato 2004 from Maculan (Breganze, Veneto). Made from 100% Vespaiola grapes, it was a luscious, honeyed wine with good body and subtle oak – delicious!

Musetti coffee and petit fours to finish and no-one was inclined to go home in a hurry. We lingered and chatted and the sense of well-being was palpable.

Leonie Allday
Chairman



Berkshire Branch

400th ANNIVERSARY AT THE WATERSIDE INN



In early February forty members of the Berkshire Branch celebrated their 400th meeting in style in the delightful surroundings of the Waterside Inn on the banks of the River Thames at Bray. After champagne and canapés and a warm welcome from Diego Masciaga, the General Manager, members sat down to enjoy lobster served with mango and avocado, followed by fillet of Angus beef cooked en brioche with mushroom duxelle and a tarragon jus; in this case en brioche involved the meat first being wrapped in pancake to absorb the moisture plus a further layer of pastry. Alternative dishes were cheese soufflé as a starter and fillet of seabass with truffle sauce as main course. The final course was a plate of four miniature desserts, followed by coffee served with mignardises.

In some respects the event was a departure from normal practice for a branch that has always emphasised the central role of wine appreciation and whose regular meetings consist of a tutored wine tasting followed by a meal provided by one of the branch's own members. As one might expect,



however, the accompanying wines served at the Waterside did not disappoint. After Michel Roux's house champagne, members enjoyed a 2011 Chablis sélection personelle from Étienne Defaix, and a 2010 Château Vieux Guinot Saint Émilion with the beef; a 2014 Pacherenc de Vic Bilh Saint Albert was served with the dessert. All the wines were beautifully balanced, not least the Chablis, whose typical minerality was offset by a smooth richness on the palate.

At the end of the meal members warmly applauded chef patron Alain Roux (pictured left), and the branch's Honorary President, Julian Jeffs, proposed a toast to all who had helped to make the event such a success. That list must undoubtedly include the branch's own chairman, Colin Mair, who had offered a musical prelude to the subsequent culinary delights by giving a short recital on the recently restored organ at St Michael's church, including music by Brahms, Buxtehude, Handel, and Samuel Wesley.

Ian Roe



Herefordshire and Monmouthshire Branch **AN INFORMAL LUNCH AT 1861**



This branch began the New Year programme with one of its unique Informal Lunches. So far as we are aware this format has not been adopted elsewhere, but is proving extremely popular and successful for us.

The committee decides on a suitable venue, which could be a gastro-pub, hotel or restaurant – and consults with the proprietor/chef on a suitable menu with choices. Occasionally, members may even select from the usual a la carte. Everyone is responsible for their own food and drinks (although a complimentary aperitif is provided by the branch).

It has proved a convivial way of exploring new places and exchanging opinions, perhaps even resulting in a future booking for the venue as worthy of a more formal occasion. It is also an ideal way to introduce potential new members, who can taste the flavour of the branch without obligation or commitment.

Our latest visit was to Restaurant 1861 at Cross Ash near Abergavenny, when 18 members and guests were presented with a pleasingly varied menu. We enjoyed a welcoming amuse

bouche of pork terrine and local rhubarb chutney, with a vegetarian option also thoughtfully provided.

Starter dishes included Cauliflower Soup with Chive Mousse; Pumpkin and Sage Risotto or Jerusalem Artichoke Salad with Truffle Oil Dressing. This was followed by Fillet of Hake with Parsley Sauce; Fricassée of Pheasant with Grain Mustard Cream and a Navarin of Root Vegetables for the vegetarians amongst us.

Something of a surprise was the arrival of a pre-dessert bouche (evidently a regular restaurant speciality) of Chilled Marrow and Ginger Soup. This didn't meet with universal approval, but certainly proved a talking point.

Desserts themselves were more conventional with Spiced Apple Fritters and Medlar Sorbet, Champagne Rhubarb Syllabub, or local cheeses.

Another surprise was a generous platter of petits fours, with some imaginative ingredients which again sparked much conversation over coffee. The restaurant made a real effort to please a very assorted (and demanding!) company and the occasion was deemed both interesting and worthwhile. Informal lunches will continue to be on the agenda for the coming year, and perhaps it is an idea which could be taken up to advantage by other branches.

Judith Stares



Blackpool and Fylde Coast Branch **XMAS AT THE FARMER'S ARMS**

Forty members and guests met upstairs in a private room at the Farmer's Arms in Great Eccleston in December to celebrate the Christmas festivities. We were pleased to include visiting members from Liverpool, and Merseyside and Mid-Cheshire branches.

As is our normal practice at Christmas the branch supplied the aperitif, this year an English sparkling wine, Ridgeview's Bloomsbury cuvée, and paid the restaurant's corkage so that members could select from the menu and bring their own wines to accompany the meal. As usual this resulted in multiple opportunities for members to taste each other's wines and a good time was enjoyed by all present.

To be totally objective some individual dishes did not meet our hopes and expectations; some portions of the pheasant were dry and the suet pudding (said to be the manager's favourite!) was stodgy but the atmosphere created by bonhomie and good wine as well as the excellent serving staff compensated.

The Branch looks forward to an interesting and enjoyable programme of monthly events in 2017.

Ron Barker
Chairman



Devonshire Branch

OCTOBER AT THE HARBOUR



Our meeting for October was at the Harbour Kitchen in Torquay. This restaurant has been open for just over a year and enjoys views over Torquay Harbour with a profusion of boats and yachts. We had an enjoyable evening with some delicious flavours, but I found the portions on the small side and, as with most restaurants with no carpet or curtains, very noisy!

Wines

Reception: Bellini Cocktail or a glass of Prosecco.

White Wine: Sharpham Dart Valley Reserve. This award winning wine has a light fresh character with lovely fruit aromas and delicate flavours.

Red Wine: Elevé Pinot Noir. From vineyards in the south-west of the Languedoc Roussillon region, near the Pyrénées: about a third of the wine is aged in French oak. The wine shows cherry and blueberry flavours on the palate and finishes with a hint of spice.

Menu

Duck liver parfait, orange and crostini or Dover sole with burnt butter and sea vegetables

Duck breast and leg, ash-baked celeriac, fermented leek and orange or hake, crab roll, samphire and cep cream

Lemon tart and raspberry sorbet or Affogato (vanilla ice cream with Espresso coffee and liqueur of your choice). This was very popular!

We were welcomed by Front of House Eshore Ward with Chef Tom Ward providing the hard graft. The wines were presented by Drew Ashington and we were well looked after by Mia. A very good evening was had by all with the restaurant receiving much praise from fellow diners

SALUTATION INN

In November members travelled by coach to Topsham and the Salutation Inn for a Sunday lunch. The Salutation is in the centre of Topsham and, although an old building, has been modernized to a very high standard. We have been several times to this venue and were not disappointed this time as we had an excellent lunch. The Chef/owner, Stephan Brooks is assisted by Sam. The wines were chosen by our own wine experts Phil and David Redhead.

The starters consisted of leek and potato soup and truffle, or local partridge with orange braised chicory, or Lyme Bay crab boudin, pickled walnuts and bok choi.

This was followed by Greendale Farm beef, celeriac purée and Bourignonn garnish, or corn-fed chicken breast, lettuce, bacon and mushroom velouté, or local brill, potato vinaigrette, baby spinach and fish red wine sauce.

The dessert choice was coconut Pannacotta and exotic fruits with coconut foam, or dark chocolate fondant with white chocolate ice cream, or raspberry millefeuille and vanilla ice cream.

Wines

Champagne Paul Laurent: this won a silver medal in the IWSC competition in 2015. Pale gold in colour with fresh and delicate aromas of lemon and apple, it makes the perfect apéritif.

Les Roches Blanches, Macon Village is a crisp white wine from southern Burgundy. Made from un-oaked Chardonnay, it exhibits fruity hints of pear and green apple and a touch of minerality. It is made by the celebrated Louis Jadot firm.

With the main course we also had a Spanish Reserva from the Marques De Carano, 2008. It won a silver medal in the IWSC



Competition. It is a richly flavoured full bodied wine made from Garnacha, Tempranillo and Cariñena grapes. It had vibrant cherry and raspberry flavours and a vanilla spice oak character.

XMAS AT ORESTONE

For our Christmas dinner this year we went to The Orestone in Maidencombe, near Torquay. We have been before to this delightful hotel with magnificent sea views, and Chef Nathan Hill didn't disappoint. Phil and David Redhead were on hand to choose the wines.

Wines:

Champagne Pierre Darcys NV, a silver medal winner IWSC 2015 Pouilly-Fuissé 2014, a stunning Chardonnay from Burgundy, Gold Medal Winner, IWSC 2015
 El Meson Rioja Gran Reserva – this is perfection in a bottle. Gold Medal & Trophy winner, International Wine Challenge 2015
 Château de Champteloup 2015, Coteaux du Layon. A luscious sweet wine from the banks of the River Layon, Médaille d'Argent, Paris 2015

Menu:

Chicken liver parfait, red onion chutney and brioche or spiced crab cake with mango salad

Sorbet

Pan fried salmon fillet with crevettes, crushed new potatoes, chive beurre blanc, or Beef Wellington, grilled vine tomato and Madeira jus

Christmas pudding and brandy sauce, or vanilla crème brûlée with shortbread biscuit, or local cheeses served with fruit, chutney and biscuits.



BIANCO GET-TOGETHER

In January we usually try to find somewhere local in case of bad weather, not that we get much of that in Torquay. Bianco's Restaurant in Torwood Street is ideal. This was not a 'gourmet' meal, but an opportunity for a get-together and to have an enjoyable evening, which we did.

Antipasto Misto Supremo: this was a sharing platter for the table and consisted of a selection of delicious Italian hors d'oeuvres, including Buffalo Mozzarella, Parma Ham, Italian salamis, olives, sun-dried tomato and salad garnish.

Main course offered a choice of Tortelloni Granchio e Arogosta (lobster and crab ravioli), Spigola al Herbe (herbed seabass) or Pollo a la Milanese (chicken breast).

Deserts were white chocolate and raspberry cheesecake or Sorbetto al Limone (lemon sorbet).

WINES

Aperitif: Prosecco Brut, a bright, well balanced wine with lovely fresh fruit flavours complemented by a refreshing acidity.

White Wine: Tasari Blanco Terre Siciliane; Catarratto is a grape from the island of Sicily, it produces a light "easy drinking" wine.

Red Wine: Tasari Rosso Terre Siciliane, Merlot/Nero d'Avola blended wine. This was an example of modern Italian winemaking on the island of Sicily. Used as part of the liberal Sicilia IGT designation, the blend marries the ubiquitous Merlot with Sicily's darling red wine grape, Nero d'Avola. The result was very smooth and fresh.

Michael Swales



London Branch

A SPECIAL LUNCH FOR ANDREW BRODIE: THE WINES OF NAPA VALLEY



Andrew Brodie was an ex-Chairman of London Branch, and a member of the EAZ Committee. When he died suddenly on 30th August, he was working with Jack Rubyn (pictured presenting the wines, above right) of Marin County Branch on a special lunch at the Michelin-starred Pied à Terre Restaurant in London, showcasing wines from the Napa Valley.

Jack suggested that we continue with the event as a special tribute to Andrew, and Mathieu Germond of Pied à Terre enthusiastically agreed. Marin County Branch very kindly agreed to donate some of its best wines for this event, and the result was sensational.

Representatives of the EAZ and St James Branches were invited to attend, in addition to London Branch, in recognition of Andrew's wider involvement.

The reception started off with a non-vintage Montreaux Brut Sparkling Wine from the Monticello Vineyards, after which we sat down to Cornish Hake, with seaweed, celery and clams accompanied by a delightful 2013 Chardonnay from Hudson in Napa's Carneros district.

Then for the next course of Partridge, with parsnip, pear and walnut, Jack had really gone to town with 1983 and 1985



vintages of Cabernet Sauvignon from Heitz Martha's Vineyard. Both were in beautiful condition, and a great accompaniment to the partridge.

This was followed by Fallow Deer, with celeriac, watercress, sprouts and chestnut. This time we were back to 1978 and 1982, with Cabernet Sauvignon from Beaulieu Vineyard's "Georges De Latour" Private Reserve. Again it was in great condition. Opinions varied as to which was best, but one very rarely has the opportunity to taste wine of this age from California. This was even more so with the 1974 and 1975 Cabernet Sauvignon from Robert Mondavi's Private Reserve, which accompanied the cheese. Altogether quite unforgettable.

Finally, a special dessert of chocolate, mandarin, honeycomb and stem ginger, accompanied by 1988 Elysium "Black Muscat" from Quady Winery: not a Napa wine this time, but very well suited to the chocolate.

Everyone agreed that this event had been a fantastic experience, and a very fitting tribute to Andrew. Special thanks are due to the team at Pied à Terre, and to Jack Rubyn and Marin County Branch for their very generous contributions.

Alan Shepherd



London Branch

ELEGANT ENGLISH STILL WINES

We met on 15th November at the Naval Club for a tasting of English still wines presented by Bernard Lamb, a founder member of the United Kingdom Vineyards Association. In most wine-producing countries, having tastings of one's own country's wine is normal; in England it is exceptional. A four-page summary of vintages since 2009 and of the origin of the grape varieties involved was handed out (email bernardlamb@btinternet.com if you would like a copy). All the whites were pale. Prices generally ranged from £10 to £16, with the sweet wine and the Chardonnay costing more. My highly subjective quality scores are out of ten and I am a generous marker.

- Chapel Down Bacchus 2014 (Kent), 12%. This had a very big and attractive bouquet of herbs, nettles and elderflowers. It tasted very fresh with a good flavour and was good value. 8/10.
- Bolney Estate Foxhole Vineyard Bacchus 2014 (Sussex), 11.5%. Very small bubbles. A lovely big bouquet. The flavour was excellent and the wine was bigger and richer than the previous one and was generally preferred. There was just detectable residual sugar. A delightful wine. 9/10.
- Stopham Estate Pinot Blanc 2013 (Sussex), 11.5%. Big legs. It said 11% on the label but seemed more. This had a bit of bottle stink, unlike other bottles of it which were better all round. Big flavour and good length. 7½/10.
- Bolney Estate Foxhole Vineyard Pinot Gris 2014 (Sussex), 11.5%. Good bouquet and flavour. Lots of attractive fruit and good acidity which would go well with food. A first-class wine. 9¼/10.
- Stopham Estate Pinot Gris 2013 (Sussex), 11.5%. A very inviting, attractive bouquet and flavour. Fresh acidity but balanced. It was much liked. 9¼/10.
- Chapel Down Kit's Coty North Downs Chardonnay 2013 (Kent), 12.5%. Lightly oaked. Big legs. A fragrant Chardonnay nose with detectable oak. Tastes of oak (but not too much) and fruit, especially citrus. Fresh acidity. Needs longer to develop. 9/10 now, more later.
- Court Garden Ditchling Rosé 2013 (Sussex), 11.5%. Rondo, Dornfelder, Pinot Gris, Ortega. An attractive rose-pink. A lovely rich bouquet and an excellent flavour, but perhaps

losing some freshness now. 9½/10 but drink up soon.

- Temple Sheen Off-dry Rosé 2015 (London, made by the organiser), about 11%. Rosé colour with gold hints. A really intense and delicious soft fruit bouquet. People shouted "strawberry" but it was made mainly with Tesco's raspberry and apple juice. Very fruity; good flavour and length. I loved it and it cost less than 80p a bottle to make.
- Bolney Estate Pinot Noir 2013 (Sussex), 11.5%. Bolney make very good sparkling and still white wines and, unusually, are specialists in English red wines. Pale red/deep rosé. Big legs. Medium-strength good Pinot bouquet (soft red fruits). Light but elegant, with a good flavour. Has potential for improving with time. 8½/10 now.
- Bolney Estate Dark Harvest 2013 (Sussex), 12%. Oaked. Rondo, six months in oak. Black, with purple edges, but colour was its best point. Good fruity bouquet; plenty of acid and tannins. It needed food. It was loved by one lady and disliked by some as being a bit crude. 7/10.
- Chapel Down Union Red 2014 (Kent and Sussex), 12%. Pinot Noir (mainly), Pinot Noir Précoce, Rondo, Dornfelder. Light red/deep rosé. Legs. Attractive soft fruit bouquet which some likened to a good Burgundy. Softly fruity, with soft tannins. Good length. This was much liked, with comments such as "gorgeous", "lovely!" Fully ready. 9½/10.
- Chapel Down Nectar 2014, 9%. Ortega, Siegerrebe, Bacchus (10% Botrytised), (Kent); late harvest and fermentation stopped halfway. Legs. A lovely fragrant bouquet and an attractive flavour – honeysuckle, lychees. Between medium and sweet, with a perfect balance. 9/10.

Included in the supper wines was the Davenport Vineyards Horsmonden Dry White Wine 2014 (East Sussex, organic), 11.5%, no stated grape varieties, and a bit disappointing. Other supper wines were Temple Sheen Recomposed Rosé/Red, 2015 (London, mainly cherries and raspberry) and for something different, Broken Shackle 2014 Classic Red, Berton Vineyards, South Eastern Australia, 13.5%, Shiraz and Merlot. Brenda Lamb provided a cold supper with puddings.

Bernard Lamb



Malmö Branch A HIDDEN JEWEL...



The Mat & Vin Slottsparken is discreetly and beautifully located in a park more or less in the city centre of Malmö. As many of us had been there before we had no problem finding our way. The restaurant seats 33 people and we filled the place to capacity this time as well. We started with two appetizers accompanied by a mature but still refreshing Cava, Recarero 2008 from Penedès, and were then served the following five-course meal created by the highly-regarded chef and owner Peter J. Skogström.

- Pickled carrots with goat's cheese cream
Sancerre Les Fredins 2012, Gitton Père et Fils
- Langoustine, root crops, ginger, chilli butter (below right)
Riesling Burg 2012, Gustave Lorentz
- Mushroom consommé, grilled celery, mushrooms
Ara Pathway Pinot Noir 2011, Marlborough (NZ)
- 100 day organic chicken, smoked tomato, beans (below left)
Côtes du Rhône Villages Séguret 2014, Les Merrelies, Dom. de l'Amauve
Pinot Noir Maltesergarten 2012, Weingut Martin Wassmer, Baden
- Vanilla ice cream, rose hip, lemon
Brännland Cider 2014

Goat's cheese and the elderberry tones in the Sancerre are of course a good match and the fairly fresh maturing Riesling from a decent producer went well with both the langoustine and the ginger. Pinot Noir from New Zealand is very often a safe and

good choice to accompany the consommé. With the chicken dish, we chose a Côte du Rhône and a Pinot Noir from Baden; both were an interesting match with the chicken. The Rhône wine had hints of cherry, herbs and liquorice, while the rarely seen Pinot Noir from one of the best German producers of red wines turned out to be surprisingly delicate; both proved to go perfectly with the tasty chicken. There were different views on the cider. This is one of very few Swedish ciders available. It also happens to be an 'ice' cider and, to my taste, it had enough acidity to match the heavy sweetness and went very well with the dessert.



This place is open for events and private arrangements only and we have visited it regularly over the years. The reason why our dinners there have been fully booked every time is not only the beautiful surroundings and the cosy interior but also Peter's ability to deliver a treat fully up to our high expectations.

Rolf Fransson



Malmö Branch

... AND ATMOSFÄR



We finished off this year at the Atmosfär Restaurant. Responsibility for the restaurant has now been taken over by Kate Wibroe who has worked there for a couple of years in different positions. One of her first steps was to change head chefs, appointing Sara Berg to take over. We had anticipated that this change would make the menu a bit more elegant than had been the case in the past few years. Although she was not in charge this evening, the guys in the kitchen really did a great job. After an amuse-bouche of lamb, foie gras and apricot, accompanied by a refreshing Champagne Brut Excellence NV from Gosset, we very much enjoyed the following five course meal:

Salt roasted beet, goat's cheese, kale
2015 Roero Arneis, Bel Colle

Oven baked halibut, chanterelles, red wine sauce
2011 Meursault Les Tillets, Dom. Patrick Javillier

Fallow deer, truffle, onion purée, thyme, celeriac
2013 Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, Poderia Boscarelli and
1996 Barolo, Parafada, Serralunga d'Alba, Massolino

Cheeses
2010 Vacqueyras Vieilles Vignes, Dom. Le Couroulu



Chocolate, coffee cream, sea buckthorn sorbet
2015 Trockenbeerenauslese (Chardonnay/Welschriesling),
Weingut Robert Goldenits

The not very common white Arneis from Piemonte with its fresh citrus matched the vegetables and especially the light touch of goat's cheese in the starter. The fish went very well with the Meursault with good balance between acidity and a bit of oak. The two reds were both excellent choices for the deer, the Vino Nobile, fruity with cherry tones and a lovely fully mature Barolo with truffle, violets/roses. The Vacqueyras again showed that this type of wine works very well with cheese. The TBA had sweetness and sufficient acidity to meet both the chocolate and the sorbet.

We were all very pleased that the restaurant has returned to the lighter and more elegant mid-sized dishes, which had been their hallmark previously. Our appreciation was shown to all the



staff after the meal and we look forward to coming back at a later date.

Rolf Fransson

Photos: Sten Mardell



Zurich Branch

TENTH YEAR JUBILEE...



In 2016 the Zurich Branch celebrated its 10th anniversary. It is not a truly old branch, but it is the only branch in the heart of Europe. Ten years ago the Macdonalds, the Bennett-Keenans and the Kellers looked for some wine and food lovers to start a new branch. And they succeeded. After ten years the branch has 35 members and is very active.

To celebrate the anniversary a unique spot was sought, and found! Chef Andreas Caminada (3 Michelin stars and 19 Gault&Millau points) has acted as host at the Schauenstein Schloss for more than twelve years, where he surprises his guests with his culinary creativity. In Bad Ragaz, a world-famous spa hotel, he started his second restaurant brand "IGNIV by Andreas Caminada" with its new gastronomic concept. Devised by the top chef, the concept is being implemented by a young passionate team, led by Silvio Germann (1 Michelin star und 16 Gault&Millau points), in the former gourmet restaurant Äbtestube. "IGNIV", Rhaeto-Romanic for "nest", is a place for the senses where sharing culinary art, indulgence and time take centre stage – a refreshing and young concept with outstanding cuisine focusing on the product. But it is also about an attitude to life: experiencing a lasting gourmet adventure with friends and acquaintances, jointly choosing from the various menu components and putting together a meal which will ultimately be served in bowls and platters as sharing dishes.

The evening started with a very particular wine tasting. Under the guidance of Georg Fromm (president of the local vintners association) and Francesco Benvenuto (chef sommelier) we did a blind tasting of six different Pinot Noirs (three from the area,

one from France, one from Germany and one from New Zealand). Unfortunately the hit rate to allocate the wines to their terroir was not too impressive.

Then, our members changed into their gala outfits to celebrate. Within the marvellous decoration equally marvellous wines and food were served. The only drawback with such feasts is, that when the next highlight turns up, you can barely remember what the former one was really about. But, who cares, *carpe diem!*

The menu

Small Appetizers: Lingue veal egg, yolk air bread, prawn tomato, celery cream cheese, egg royale
Adank's Brut Sparkling wine (Adank, Fläsch)

Starters: Duck liver quince milk, scallop, sea-buckthorn, parsnip, mackerel, grapefruit radish, steamed ravioli, lettuce salad, apple, red cabbage salad, beetroot buttermilk
Viognier (Möhr Niggli, Maienfeld)

Main course: Veal braised cheek saddle, black salsify mashed roasted, potato beignets, carpaccio of calf's head
Pinot Noir Grand Maître (Hermann, Fläsch)

Surprise: Nuggets of Val Lumnezia chicken, rock lobster, pumpkin, tortellini, breast of veal
Completer (Donatsch, Malans)

Dessert: Chocolate cake terrine, compote pears, salted caramel shot, praliné, tartare of red wine pears, vanilla spoon
Pinot Gris Is-Wy (late harvest, von Tschärner, Reichenau)

Candy Store (selection of sweets to take away)

After a good night's sleep, members concluded the anniversary event with a lunch in the nearby vineyards of Jenins at the restaurant "Gasthof zur Bündte", with a relatively light meal of local specialties like the Riesling Soup, Braised Beef in Red Wine or "Capuns" local style. Again we enjoyed local wines, such as Federweisser and Pinot Noir.

And now, we look forward to a bright future for our Branch and for the whole Society.

Kurt Haering
Chairman



Zurich Branch

... MANESSE TASTING MENU



The trend for innovative food tasting menus has finally arrived in Zurich! An outstanding example of this is Restaurant Maison Manesse where an enthusiastic team led by manager, Miguel Ledesma, and chef, Fabian Spiquel, have transformed a classic cuisine restaurant into a contemporary food temple. Members of the Zurich Branch enjoyed a great evening at this Michelin-starred restaurant.

The evening started with some speciality gin and tonics, a trend in the UK I am told, but something new for us in Zurich. When seated at the table we had an introduction by the man who is orchestrating Maison Manesse's unique culinary concept, 30-year-old chef Fabian Spiquel, who was born into the restaurant business in Australia.

Then we sampled the menu of the day, which had the following courses:

- "The 5 tastes" (five drops of liquids to be sipped through a ceramic straw for us to identify – not easy!) (pictured below left)
- Veal head terrine with mango and fresh horseradish purée
- Poached lobster in nori butter with physalis and tomatillo chutney, on the side pickled tomatillo, tomato mayonnaise, smoked herring caviar

- Onsen egg (boiled for 1 hour at 63°C) with porcini mushrooms and a parmesan chip
- Poached broccoli in dashi with broccoli purée and sacha-inchi nuts (pictured below right)
- Salmon from the Bachtel, cooked in escabèche with pearl barley, peas, broad and mange-tout beans
- Suckling pork belly, cooked for 18 hours, fermented apricot ketchup and home-made kimchi
- Frozen macarons
- Marshmallow, finished over a candle flame
- Chocolate fondant, sage crumble, peach sorbet and tonka beans cream

The meal was accompanied by a Rioja Rayos Uva 2015, a "biodynamic", fresh tasting un-oaked Rioja, blended from Tempranillo, Graciano and Garnacha, which fitted nicely.

Our extremely knowledgeable and hospitable waiter explained each course fully as it was served, although some of the ingredients were not familiar to us. It was truly a great experience and also an unforgettable evening in very pleasant company.

Kurt Haering
Chairman



Northampton Branch

ANNUAL DINNER AT HAMBLETON



On Sunday 9th October, we returned to the excellent Hambleton Hall to celebrate the 46th anniversary of the founding of the branch with our Annual Dinner. Betty Meadows has a special relationship with the hotel and once again she liaised with the owner, Tim Hart, and Aaron Patterson, Michelin starred chef, to devise a menu of outstanding quality.

As an innovation, each course was served with two wines with labels hidden. All we knew was that one was from the Old World and the other from the New. After each course, sommelier Dominique Baduel described the character of the wines without identifying which was which. It then fell to our Secretary, Nigel Kay, and Assistant Secretary, Robin Sheppard (recently awarded the IWFS Bronze medal) to give their verdict on quality and origin, while the rest of us discussed our own judgement.

The fresh crab with Virgin Mary and celery ice cream was a marvellous creation and was served with a 2013 Vermentino, Poggio al Tessoro, Solosole from Tuscany and a 2013 Oveja Negra, Chardonnay/Viognier from Maule Valley, Chile, both delightful but with the slightly creamier Vermentino winning most plaudits. Instead of the traditional fish course we had a truffled cauliflower cheese nicely al dente with a crispy topping and a savoury mushroom sauce on the side. This was



accompanied by light red wines: a 2014 Ata Rangi Crimson, Pinot Noir from Martinborough and a 2014 Beaujolais L'Ancien, Terres Dorées, Gamay, from Jean-Paul Brun, which could easily have been mistaken for Pinot Noir – both delicious.

Then came a lamb dish from local Lavinton Farm with a melt-in-the-mouth slice of loin cooked in a water bath and a delicious juicy cut of roast belly served with pepper stew and rosemary sauce. The more robust red wines to accompany this were a 2010 Château Tayet Cuvée Prestige, Bordeaux Supérieur and a 2012 Miles Mossop 'Max', Stellenbosch, the latter perhaps winning more praise. The dessert was Golden Chocolate with passion fruit and caramelised peanuts. As ever it proves difficult to match a chocolate dish with wine and on this occasion we only had one – a 2013 Banyuls Rimage from Cazes.

Aaron Patterson came in to accept our praise, while Flemming Rathach gave an appraisal of the individual courses interspersed with questions as to how certain flavours and effects had been achieved. Nikki Kidger, our Chairperson, brought proceedings to a conclusion with votes of thanks to all who had contributed to produce such an outstanding meal, rated by many as being the best for many years.

John Kelly



Merseyside and Mid-Cheshire Branch CHRISTMAS CELEBRATED IN STYLE...



The nineteenth century mock Gothic surroundings of Peckforton Castle in Cheshire provided the backdrop for our Christmas celebration. Members and friends gathered in the Dungeon Bar for a Festive Apéritif – Pinot Grigio Rosé, Zellina – before enjoying a five-course meal in the beautiful Hexagon Dining room.

The Menu

- Roasted parsnip velouté
- Loch Duart smoked salmon pavé with shaved celeriac & crab lasagne
- Dingley Dell Hispi Cabbage with mulled pear
- Roasted duck breast, confit of duck leg, roast parsnip and charred cauliflower
- Mont Blanc – whipped & shaved chestnut, torched meringue with iced mandarin
- Coffee & Petit Fours

The wines perfectly complemented the food – Chardonnay Merry Mole and Prince di L'Isle Neffies – both from the Castle's cellar. Vegetarian and gluten free options were also provided

ensuring that everyone could partake fully in the sumptuous Festive fayre.

The branch has a full and varied programme for 2017, commencing in January with a wine tasting and dinner at La Boheme, in Lymm.

Angela Britland



Gift of Membership

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

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

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

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

Membership can be redeemed for the calendar year in which the certificate was issued or the following year. If redeemed

after 1st November in the year of issue it will cover membership up to the end of the following year.

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

Margaret Chippendale
EAZ Membership Registrar

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



Merseyside and Mid-Cheshire Branch

...RETURN TO LA BOHEME



We started another year of fine dining with a return visit to La Boheme in Lymm. This is a favourite January venue for members and guests, and the excellent fayre is always accompanied by a wine tasting.

This year the wines were selected and presented by our Chairman, Paul Bishop. Paul chose lesser known wines from Southern France, as follows.

1. The aperitif was a Crémant du Jura, Domaine de Montbourgeau. This is a delightful bone dry sparkler from the village of L'Etoile. It is made from young vines, by Nicole Deriaux at her family domaine, by the Champagne method. It is a Chardonnay bottled without dosage but rounded and deliciously easy to drink.
2. Picpoul de Pinet, Domaine Félines-Jourdan 2015. This wine could be considered the Muscadet of the South of France. Crisp and bone dry, the wine is shy on the nose but it has delicate fruit flavours and an appealing texture in the mouth.
3. La Clape, Arpège, Château Rouquette-sur-Mer 2015. This white wine, from La Clape, includes the Bourboulenc grape, which gives the wine its grip, with Roussanne added for body and flavour. Bone dry, vibrant and fruity, with real length of flavour. Perfect with food but refreshing enough to be enjoyed on its own.
4. Pinot Noir Puy de Dôme, Cave Saint Verny 2015. This is a lovely cherry-like Pinot Noir from the Auvergne. It is deeply coloured, unoaked and full flavoured.
5. Domaine Jones, Côtes Catalanes Grenache 2014. This is a full bodied, southern French wine, bursting with ripe succulent fruit. It comes from Maury in the Roussillon. The 2014 is full-flavoured, ripe and well-rounded, with a touch of spice.

6. The final wine of the presentation was Bandol, Domaine Tempier, 2013. This great estate in Bandol produces a range of wines of distinction, individuality and excellence. This so-called 'classique' blend is made from grapes grown across the estate, with Mourvèdre in the ascendant. The 2013 has depth and weight of fruit with real lift.

The menu, provided by Olivier, was as excellent as the wines. Each course provided a choice of three dishes to suit every palate, with delicious gluten-free adaptations.

LES ENTRÉES

- Cassolettes de Moules aux Trois Saveurs
Fresh Scottish mussels, served in a light, creamy saffron and orange sauce, bound with a chiffonade of carrots, leeks, fennel and orange segments, served with ciabatta toast.
- Parfait de Volaille
Chicken liver parfait, flavoured with cognac and served with fig compote and toasted brioche.
- Trio de Porc
Crispy pork belly, with black and white pudding, served on a pea purée and caramelised shallot confit, Calvados and apple jus.

LES PLATS.

- Filet de Colin
Pan fried hake served on a bed of seasonal vegetables and new potatoes and finished with a light, creamy orange and rosemary 'beurre blanc'.
- Ballotine de Faisan Farcie à la Pistache
Boneless pheasant filled with spinach, pistachio and green pepper stuffing and served on a bed of wilted savoy cabbage, a julienne of vegetables and potato croquettes, garnished with a fresh thyme jus.
- Rôti d'Agneau
Lamb rump presented on a slice of potato roulade, filled with roasted aubergine, roasted pepper, asparagus and red onion marmalade, coated with a rosemary and garlic jus.

LES DESSERTS

- Crème Brulée and Tuile
- Assiette Chocolaterie
A platter consisting of chocolate tart, chocolate ice cream and profiteroles filled with vanilla ice cream and garnished with crème anglaise and chocolate sauce.
- Brewton Sablé aux Fruits de la Forêt
Brittany shortbread topped with crème mousseline and fresh forest fruits, garnished with a blackcurrant and cassis purée.

The meal was rounded off with coffee and petit fours.

Angela Brilland



Leicester Branch

AUTUMN EVENTS



On 15th September John Hind arranged for us to revisit **34 Windsor Street**, Burbage, near Hinckley. We dined there soon after it opened in June 2014 and we were very impressed so thought we should have a return visit.

It was a lovely evening and we were able to enjoy an aperitif, *Côtes de Provence Signature Rosé* from *Château du Brigue*, France in the yard behind the large room where we were to eat our meal sitting at a large rectangular table.

For a starter we chose between tomato with Burrata (an Italian cheese made from mozzarella and cream) or a warm salad of peas, broad beans and shallots with hen's egg. I was surprised to see the waitress with a tray of filled wine glasses – a white *Marques de Riscal* from Rueda, Spain – which were passed round instead of being served from bottles at the table.

Mains were a pan-fried fillet of sea trout with a summer vegetable risotto, samphire and a Noilly Prat sauce or a breast of chicken with fondant potato, ratatouille and broccoli and a red wine sauce. I chose the sea trout, however I'm almost certain it was salmon which had been overcooked. The sauce was unremarkable. The red wine was a *Valpolicella Classico* from Bertani, Villa Novare, Veneto.



The descriptions of the puddings we had been promised didn't match what was served. We should have had 'Kalamansi lime set mousse, passion fruit and mango espuma, maple pastry, puffed brown rice and rosemary sugar' or roasted peach, mascarpone mousse, raspberry purée and Amaretto biscuits. The second choice was just recognizable from the photo but the mousse was presented as piped yellow balls decorated with orange peel.

Coffee and tea were served in a desultory fashion and generally the menu was rather pretentious and disappointing. Several people said they would not go there again and it was rather expensive at £59.50 a head. In spite of this we had a good evening because we always enjoy great friendship and conversation.

In contrast on October 20th we dined in a village pub in Tugby near Uppingham. **The Fox and Hounds** has recently been refurbished and is run by a very enthusiastic chef proprietor, Stef Ball. He recently celebrated his 30th birthday! We dined at two tables in one leg of the dining room so that customers not in our party could be served.

Stef said he was not interested in wine and left the choice to his partner. She said she used an agency and so the wine list was quite short. However we enjoyed a glass of dry rosé – *Primi Soli Pinot Grigio* as an apéritif, and a *Victor Berard Chablis* from France and *La Grupa Malbec* from Argentina with the meal.

For starters we chose from a chicken liver parfait, a sea food platter or a sweet potato and butternut soup with crusty bread and croutons. Most of us chose the sea food platter. It was excellent – king prawns, crayfish tails, smoked salmon, crab meat and Marie Rose sauce – but rather filling. The parfait and the soup were said to be very good.

The game Bourguignon with creamed potatoes was good but some said undistinguishable from beef. It was served with a bacon cobbler – a kind of scone. I very much enjoyed my fried cod loin and my husband liked the pork fillet stuffed with wild mushrooms and black pudding. Helpings were generous and the accompanying vegetables well cooked.

Puds were delicious if conventional – sticky toffee pudding with vanilla ice cream, lemon tart with blackcurrant sorbet or white chocolate and salted caramel cheese cake. Tea or coffee followed. The service was good, the cooking excellent and all for £46.

Finally on the 23rd of October Steven and Sally Gasztowicz arranged for us to visit John’s House – a fairly new restaurant in Mountsorrel near Loughborough. **John’s House** was given a Michelin star in 2015 – the only one in Leicestershire and it is well deserved. The venue is rather strange. The restaurant is upstairs in part of Stonehurst Farm’s buildings, although there is a small sitting room and a bar downstairs. We were invited to go upstairs straight away. We passed through one dining room into the next which will take parties of 20 people. There were three tables for us. The walls were rather bare and there was an intriguing full-sized rough wooden door in the wall at the end of the room – leading to Bluebeard’s den? There was little room to stand between the tables but delightful waitresses served us with Masottina Prosecco. When everyone had arrived we were asked to sit down for the canapés. Three delicious ones each – a small pastry boat with sea food, a little rissole and a smoking bowl with another delicious morsel inside.

The starters were substantial. I chose salmon with cucumber oyster and dill. My husband enjoyed a hen’s egg really crispy on the outside and floating in pumpkin soup. A third choice was goat’s cheese terrine. We drank Willow Glen Semillion Chardonnay 2014.

Our chicken main course was superb with charred leeks – long pieces of leek tasting very good, wild mushrooms and a sauce of toasted hay, suitable for the farm yard setting! Other members enjoyed the fillet of pollock with cabbage, curry spices, broccoli purée and lemon. The vegetarian option was barley risotto with Colston Bassett stilton, pear and truffle. We drank a 2014 Fleurie, Jules de Somzy.

My pudding of meringue and caramelized apple was amazing. The meringue made a very thin cylinder which enclosed the apple purée, served with ice cream and a honey sauce. Geoffrey enjoyed a kind of trifle served in a glass – brown sugar cream, quince, sherry jelly, sweet cheese and coffee. Others tasted a plate of passion fruit curd, dark chocolate sorbet and passion fruit caramel. A plate of petit fours followed with the coffee – tiny filled meringues, a square of fudge and the piece de resistance a lollipop made of white chocolate with a truffle interior!



I don’t think I’ve ever eaten such a good meal with such inventive dishes – miracles of construction – and all for £74. It’s a shame that the ambience doesn’t compare with Hambleton, our Michelin starred restaurant in Rutland, but in my opinion the cooking is much better. We talked to the chef, John Duffin, on our way out. He trained at Hibiscus in London and with Marcus Wareing. He said he had wanted to come back to Leicestershire. His brother owns the farm and farm shop adjacent to the restaurant. We are very fortunate to have him.

Mary Jewell



Manchester Branch

CHRISTMAS AT MANCHESTER HOUSE



On 10th December seventy members and guests celebrated at Manchester House for our Christmas Event, this being our fourth successive visit.

For the Reception, which was held on the 12th floor with good views over Manchester, we had canapés and Billecart-Salmon Champagne. Aidan Byrne, the Chef/Owner of the restaurant had kindly given a 12-bottle case of the Champagne to us. The Champagne was delightful – nobody was heard to say otherwise! The canapés were well received, especially the salmon and seafood ones.

We then progressed to the restaurant on the 2nd floor to be served our meal. The menu card on each table read:

1. Venison, loch cured in whisky, with roasted fig and gingerbread served with Mountadam Shiraz 2014 Barossa, Australia.
2. Casserole of monkfish and mushrooms with cockles and thyme served with Long Beach Chenin Blanc 2015 Robertson, South Africa.
3. Poached pheasant, Albufeira sauce and traditional garnish, served with Pernand-Vergelesses Blanc 2014 Vallet Frères, France.

4. Dessert of chocolate and hazelnut, coffee liquorice served with Els Pyreneus Grenat 2014 Maury, France.
5. Coffee, mince pies and macaroons.

The starter was very well received; one lady on my table was heard to describe it as divine! The venison loin was superb, although I thought the Mountadam Shiraz was a bit thin and finished short. The casserole of monkfish was gorgeous; beautifully cooked and pleasing on the palate and it went well with the Chenin Blanc which was a very pleasant tippie. My poached pheasant was a little underdone – this was always likely to happen when serving game to 70 people and some did have it perfectly cooked. The Pernand-Vergelesses complemented the dish well; in my opinion it was an excellent wine just as a white Burgundy should be and was the best wine of the day so far. The dessert was well received as was the Maury accompanying it. This wonderful occasion was finished off with coffee, mince pies and macaroons.

This was an outstanding meal and Aidan Byrne and his team fully deserved the accolades they received from the members. A brilliant event, and well done to Ronnie Costello who, yet again, organised this excellent lunch for the Branch.

Bob Lloyd



Capital Branch

HAIL AND FAREWELL



It was both a joyful and a sad occasion when nearly thirty of us went to Hyns Chinese restaurant in Ascot for the AGM and final event of the Capital Branch.

Pam, our erstwhile Editor of Food & Wine, arranged the event. There were many old friends from IWFS there and the camaraderie was well in evidence as greetings were exchanged between all. As the Branch could not carry on with so few members it was proposed during the AGM that Capital Branch should amalgamate with Surrey Hills. This was carried unanimously and the amalgamated Branch will still be known as Surrey Hills.

After the AGM, we enjoyed a delicious meal with wine at this well-known Chinese venue and it was a fitting end to a Branch which has held some memorable events, demonstrations and

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Surrey Hills Branch

IS IT CHILLY IN CHILE?



Well, yes it is when you are up in the Andes, the longest continental mountain range in the world and you are above the snow line where there are mountains and extinct volcanoes reaching up to 22,000 feet or some 7,000 metres. However it is not chilly when you are experiencing a wine-tasting in Surrey conducted by the extremely knowledgeable Doctor Bernard Lamb. Alan and Stephanie Shepherd were our hosts for this event and Stephanie was the chef.

Bernard explained that there have been wines grown in Chile since the sixteenth century when the Spanish conquistadors came over, then came the nineteenth century when French varieties were planted.

We were welcomed with Tabali, Encantado Reserva Chardonnay 2012 Limari Valley, 14%, a light fresh white wine.

We then had a tasting of the following wines:

- Quinta Generación 2002, Casa Silva, Colchagua Valley, (50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Carmenère, 10% Shiraz and 10% Petit Verdot).
- Concha Y Toro Cabernet Sauvignon, Winemaker's Lot 159/162, 2003, Upper Maipo Valley, 14.5%.
- Doña Dominga Gran Reserva Carmenère, Viña Casa Silva, Colchagua Valley, 14%.

The three old reds were all very dark, black with purple edges, very fruity and complex – delicious even without food!

Stephanie had researched Chilean recipes and for the starter we had Lenguado con Aceitunas, Sole layered with Olives and Courgettes, accompanied by Luis Felipe Edwards Reserve Winemaker's Selection Chardonnay Viognier 2015, Maule and Rapel Valleys, 13.5% (has French oak).

The main course was Pollo a Naranja; Chicken in Orange and Walnut Sauce accompanied by Luis Felipe Edwards Bin 31 Merlot 2014, Valle Central, 13%.

For dessert there was Mousse de Ruibarbo – Rhubarb Mousse with Late Harvest Concha Y Toro, Sauvignon Blanc 2014, DO Valle del Maule, 12%.

We found these wines very innovative and we very much appreciated Bernard's knowledge and expertise. The older wines came from his cellar and others were from Waitrose at very reasonable prices. He cannot be thanked enough for his erudite explanations. Likewise we thank Stephanie for her expert cooking, and both she and Alan for hosting the event.

Helen Mills
Chairman

PRESENTATION TO HELEN MILLS

This event was used as the opportunity to make a presentation of the Society's Diploma for long and distinguished service to Branch Chairman Helen Mills. She has been in this post since 1986, and also served for many years on the Regional Committee. The presentation was made by EAZ Events Co-ordinator Stephanie Shepherd.



➔ *continued from page 36*

food educational experiences over the years in the true spirit of André Simon. Apart from visits to factories, food preparation outlets, wine tastings and restaurants, there have been many – some quite esoteric – events at Brunning Farm, Wokingham, where both Sid and Pam have presided with panache serving both delicious meals and excellent wines. We in the IWFS salute you. We can't thank you enough for the extraordinary

dedication to our Society and Capital Branch in particular. The flowers and thank-you's were an indication of our appreciation. In Surrey Hills we hope to continue this tradition of excellence.

Helen Mills
Chairman of Surrey Hills

EAZ ABRM & AGM

24th September 2017

How is your Subscription to IWFS spent? What are the Society's plans for the future? Come to our region's second Annual General Meeting and find out. Come and tell us what you think. Come and help to shape the Society's future. All members of IWFS living in the Europe Africa region have the right to attend and vote at the AGM, so have your say, don't leave it to everyone else. Formal Notice of these meetings will be included in the July issue of Food & Wine but you can book your place now!

Annual General Meeting

We will be holding the Europe Africa Zone's second Annual General Meeting in London on Sunday 24th September 2017 at 1715. The AGM will take place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 100 Cromwell Road, London, SW7 4ER, just a few yards from Gloucester Road Tube Station. From 1700 there will be a glass of something fizzy to welcome you before the meeting itself.

Black Tie Dinner: HQS Wellington

A Black Tie Dinner on HQS Wellington will follow the AGM. Moored at Temple Stairs – five minutes' walk from Temple Tube Station – this last surviving Grimsby class sloop saw service during the Second World War. She has served as the headquarters of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners since 1948. As well as a four-course meal in the Court Room we will enjoy an aperitif on the Quarter Deck, taking full advantage of the fabulous panoramic views from St. Paul's to the London Eye. The journey from the hotel, where the AGM will take place, to HQS Wellington will be approximately 20 minutes via the District or Circle lines.

Annual Branch Representatives Meeting

To make the best use of the time, we have also arranged the Annual Branch Representatives Meeting to take place on the same day; together with sub-committee meetings on Events, PR/Marketing, Membership – including new Branches, and Electronic Communications.

All Branches are entitled to send representatives to the ABRM and we hope to see every Branch represented on 24th September.

The Sub-Committee meetings are a new departure for EAZ. All members are welcome to join the sub-committee which appeals to them, or more than one if you wish. We hope you will take this opportunity to help shape our work for 2018 and beyond.

Stay a night or two

Mindful of the high costs of meeting in London, we have negotiated an advantageous rate with the hotel which will apply both on Sunday night and Monday night, enabling members to stay on for a second day in London and perhaps take in a show. Even for the most popular shows, tickets are usually more readily available on Monday evenings and Mondays are also good days for the block buster exhibitions at the big museums and galleries. But you do still have to book in advance.

Please book your hotel room direct with the hotel. You can email lonke.reservations@ihg.com or telephone 0207 341 2340, mentioning IWFS. Or you can book on-line using the code.

Because of its proximity to Gloucester Road Tube Station, which is served by the Piccadilly, District and Circle lines, the hotel is well placed for those wanting a couple of days away. It is just

one stop from the museums in Kensington and two from Harrods and Harvey Nicols. The hotel was fully refurbished in 2016 and, a rarity in central London, has a one-acre garden.

Timetable for the day

Sunday 24th September 2017 at Crowne Plaza Hotel, Kensington, 100 Cromwell Road, London SW7 4ER

- 1030: Guests will start arriving: Tea and Coffee to be provided.
- 1100-1200: Annual Branch Representatives Meeting (ABRM) at The Cromwell Suite rooms 1 & 2
- 1200-1300: Lunch in Hotel Restaurant; three-course buffet, IWFS will supply the wine with lunch.
- 1315 onwards: Sub Committees
1315-1445: Membership (Cromwell 1); PR/Marketing (Cromwell 2)
1445-1615: Events (Cromwell 1); Electronic Communications (Cromwell 2)
- 1700: Champagne Reception for AGM Attendees
- 1715-1745: Annual General Meeting (AGM) and feedback from Sub Committees at The Cromwell Suite rooms 1 & 2
- 1815: Depart for Black Tie Dinner, HQS Wellington
- 1830 for 1900: Black Tie Dinner at HQS Wellington, Temple Stairs, Victoria Embankment, London, WC2R 2PN

What will it cost?

- One night at the Crowne Plaza Hotel including full English Breakfast: £195.00 for single occupancy / £205.00 for two people sharing. This rate applies on both Sunday 24th September and Monday 25th September
- Lunch at the hotel only: £28.95 (option A)
- AGM & Dinner on HQS Wellington only: £105.00 (option B)
- Lunch and Dinner: £115.00 (option C)

How do I book and pay?

Please book and pay for your hotel accommodation direct with the Hotel on the telephone number given above quoting reference: IWFS. For all other elements please email John Nicholas, EAZ Treasurer, johnsnicholas@aol.co.uk giving: the name of your Branch; the names of the people in your party and whether they are members; their dietary requirements; and the options (detailed above) for which you are booking.

- Payment should be made by Bank Transfer in GBP (£sterling) to: Bank: HSBC; Branch: Witney Branch; Sort Code: 40-47-07; Account Number: 41699075; Account Name: IWFS Europe Africa Ltd.
- For International Transfers: IBAN: GB48MIDL40470741699075; BIC: MIDL GB22. Please include the reference: EAZ 2017
- If you wish to pay by credit card please contact John either by email or mobile: (00) 41 79 753 68 81. Payments by credit card will incur a 3% surcharge.
- If you prefer to book by post, please send the same information with a cheque as follows: J. S. Nicholas (for IWFS EAC), c/o Mrs G.S. Moore, 2 Stevenson Close, East Hanney, Oxfordshire OX12 0FF

Cancellation Policy

Members will have a 14-day cooling off period from receipt of their payment during which they can cancel and receive a full refund. After the 14-day cooling off period, payments will not be refunded unless a replacement registration is received. You are advised to have full insurance to cover cancellation.



You may have visited London many times, but there will always be something new to delight you. This is an opportunity to experience a London that you have never seen before.

From Monday 28th May to Saturday 2nd June 2018, IWFS members will be discovering prestigious new and historic venues not accessible to ordinary visitors, and enjoying some of the very best food and wine that the capital has to offer.

IWFS International Festivals take place every three years with each region hosting the Festival in succession. In 2018 the Europe Africa region will be your hosts in London.

The International Festival is the flagship event of the IWFS calendar. Each one is designed by local IWFS members to highlight the best their city has to offer. They offer unique insights into the culture, and gastronomy of the city and region and unrivalled opportunities to make new friends among like-minded people from around the world.

THE FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

The detailed programme is still evolving, but we plan to visit the spectacular and historical Livery Halls belonging to two of the Great 12 Livery Companies of the City of London. We will dine in a former royal palace and visit the 21st century home of an internationally known food producer. Travel will be by luxury coach and by boat on the River Thames.

We are also planning a series of short walking tours to introduce you to some of our famous historic and cultural icons.

And of course the wine and food will be everything that you expect from an IWFS International Festival.

PRE AND POST TOURS

In addition to the main festival programme there will also be opportunities to extend your stay in Europe. Perhaps you might like to join us on a visit to the Champagne region of France, or to tour English wine producers in Sussex and Hampshire, or perhaps to stay in London for an opportunity to dine at some of

the gourmet restaurants which were unable to accommodate large numbers during the Festival itself.

ACCOMMODATION

We have chosen the fabulous 5-star Corinthia Hotel as our base for the Festival. A 21st century Grand Hotel it combines the grace and grandeur of bygone years with contemporary style and modern amenities.

Located on the edge of Whitehall, a stone's throw from the river, with Trafalgar Square, Big Ben and the London Eye all within ten minutes walk.

For shopaholics The Strand and Covent Garden are an easy 15 minutes walk while Regent Street and Piccadilly (for Fortnum and Mason and the Royal Academy) are just two stops away on the Bakerloo Line from the nearby Embankment Station.

Within the hotel you will find luxurious bedrooms with large en suite bathrooms, a comfortable lounge for afternoon tea or a light breakfast, two gourmet restaurants, an infinity pool and the largest spa in London. The hotel is offering members very competitive rates during the festival.

BECOMING PART OF THIS EVENT

This Festival is open to all IWFS members worldwide. The number of members who can take part will be limited so early booking will be key. Full details of the programme and costs will be on the iwfs.org website in early March 2017 and we expect booking to start in April.

In the coming months we expect to publish information about some of the venues we will be visiting which will also be posted on the website.

If you would like early information about the programme or have any queries about the event please contact: Stephanie Shepherd, Chairman, London International Festival Committee at stephanie.shepherd@iwfs.london



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Zambia, Lusaka

25th March 2017

A Taste of India luncheon will be held at the Masala Mantra Restaurant, Lusaka. Contact Ken Cummins, email ken@blczambia.com

UK St James's

29th March 2017

Join us for a four-course dinner, with matching wines at Gauthier Soho, in an elegant townhouse in a quiet part of Soho. Contact Selina Dong via branch.stjames@gmail.com.

UK Herefordshire & Monmouthshire

30th March 2017

Lunch at Corse Lawn Hotel & Restaurant, near Tewkesbury, reputed for consistently excellent cuisine. Contact Peter McGahey, email peter.mcgahey@btinternet.com.

UK Merseyside & Mid Cheshire

31st March 2017

Dinner at The Architect, Chester – a classic pub restaurant within the city walls and overlooking Roodee racecourse. Contact Tim Hodges, email tim@new-pool.demon.co.uk.

UK Devonshire

13th April 2017

Dinner at Glazebrook House Hotel, South Brent, Devon. Contact Geeta Lloyd, email geetalloyd@gmail.com.

UK Berkshire

21st April 2017

Tasting of Alpine wines inc wines from Switzerland, Austria and Savoie. Contact Julie Graham, email julie.graham@brayclose.com.

UK Merseyside & Mid Cheshire

23rd April 2017

Lunch at Panoramic 34, Liverpool, taking in the magnificent view of the Liverpool skyline in one of the UK's highest restaurants. Contact Tim Hodges, email tim@new-pool.demon.co.uk.

UK Bath & Bristol

28th April 2017

Robert Edwards Memorial Dinner at Merchants Hall, Bristol – members are welcome to join us for a special black tie dinner at this prestigious venue. Contact Tony Griffin, phone: 01934 835846 or email tonygriffin987@gmail.com.

SONOMA, CALIFORNIA (USA)

2nd to 6th May 2017

The chance for members to learn, first hand, why Sonoma is no longer little brother to the Napa Valley. Winery visits and exquisite dining and accommodation are all in store. Reservations now closed. Go to the Americas pages of the website to find out more.

UK Herefordshire & Monmouthshire

11th May 2017

A demonstration and tasting of Indian cookery, at midday, at a venue near Hereford. Contact Peter McGahey, email peter.mcgahey@btinternet.com.

UK Devonshire

18th May 2017

Dinner at the Orange Tree, Torquay – please do join us for some of the best locally sourced produce. Contact Geeta Lloyd, email geetalloyd@gmail.com.

UK Devonshire

8th June 2017

Dinner at Chloe's, Plymouth, where the focus is on French cuisine. Contact Geeta Lloyd, email geetalloyd@gmail.com.

UK Merseyside & Mid Cheshire

25th June 2017

Lunch at East Lancashire Steam Railway, Bury – enjoy first class service and fine dining while journeying through the charming Lancashire countryside. Contact Tim Hodges, email tim@new-pool.demon.co.uk.

BALTIC CRUISE (EUROPE)

29th June to 7th July 2017

Now fully booked. A magical cruise of the Baltic with food and wine experiences in cities such as Copenhagen, Helsinki, Tallinn and St Petersburg. Details are on our website.

STOCKHOLM (SWEDEN)

7th to 10th July 2017

A chance to enjoy this beautiful city described at the "Venice of the North". Also fully booked but please contact John Nicholas, email johnnicholas@aol.com if you are keen to attend.

UK Bath & Bristol

12th July 2017

Lunch and garden visit at Ston Easton – delightful 18th century house. A chance to enjoy their tasting menu and their delightful gardens. Contact Tony Griffin, email tonygriffin987@gmail.com.

UK Merseyside & Mid Cheshire

26th July 2017

Your chance to lunch at the beautiful Bodysgallen Hall and Gardens, Llandudno, North Wales. Contact Tim Hodges at tim@new-pool.demon.co.uk.

UK Berkshire

11th August 2017

Demonstration of sugar craft and also the day for our Summer buffet. Contact Julie Graham, email julie.graham@brayclose.com for details.

UK Bath & Bristol

17th August 2017

Lunch at Il Giardino, Clevedon, a family run Italian restaurant on the sea-front. Contact Tony Griffin, phone: 01934 835846 or email tonygriffin987@gmail.com.

UK Merseyside & Mid Cheshire

23rd August 2017

Lunch at The Shippons Pub and Kitchen, Cheshire fayre with very good wines. Contact Tim Hodges, email tim@new-pool.demon.co.uk.

UK Bath & Bristol

21st September 2017

Lunch at award winning Little Barwick House, nr Yeovil. Contact Tony Griffin, phone 01934 835846 or email tonygriffin987@gmail.com.

LONDON (UK)

24th to 25th September 2017

Join the EAZ for their black tie dinner aboard the historic HQS Wellington moored on the river Thames. As part of the EAZ AGM itinerary, places first allocated to EAZ members, then open to members worldwide. Max 80. See page 38.

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND (USA)

12th to 16th October 2017

Stay tuned for details of a Great Weekend and AGM, hosted by the Americas in Baltimore. Max 60.

UK Berkshire

20th October 2017

Tasting of wines from Languedoc and Roussillon by Simon Taylor from Stone, Vine and Sun. Contact Julie Graham, email julie.graham@brayclose.com.

UK Merseyside & Mid Cheshire

4th November 2017

Lunch at 39 Steps, Styal, Cheshire – contact Tim Hodges, email tim@new-pool.demon.co.uk.

UK Merseyside & Mid Cheshire

15th December 2017

Christmas Dinner at the Grosvenor, Chester, Cheshire – contact Tim Hodges, email tim@new-pool.demon.co.uk.

PERTH (AUSTRALIA)

9th to 11th March 2018

This APZ AGM Weekend is hosted by the Western Australia branch and will be one to remember. A post-tour to the Great Southern and Margaret River wine regions will be from 12th to 14th March. Open first to APZ members, then to members from other zones. Max 100. Watch here for further details.

LONDON (UK)

28th May to 2nd June 2018

The next IWFS International Festival is heading for London. A 5-star hotel, dining in a historic livery hall and a former royal palace plus a visit to the 21st century home of an internationally known food producer are all in the plans. More details now on the website.

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