



Whitewater Valley Wine Society

Celebrating 25 years of wine tasting in North Hampshire

www.whitewaterwine.org.uk

Tasting venue: The Raven Hotel, Hook, RG27 9HS

Secretary: Keith Cooper, 07976 272822



Wednesday 8th February 2012



Members' Favourite Wines

Presented by members of our Society

Venue: The Raven Hotel, Hook, RG27 9HS.

Welcome drink from 7.45pm.

AGM 8pm; Tasting approx 8.15pm.

Cost £12 members, £15 non-members.

Our Society would not exist without its loyal membership and we are indeed fortunate to have so many wine enthusiasts within our ranks. It is therefore fitting that we should open the floor to eight of our members, who will each introduce a wine of their choice.

Our master of ceremonies for the evening will be our very own Val Richardson, who has worked tirelessly to put this evening together for us.

As we progress through the evening, each of our volunteer members will take a minute or two to introduce their chosen wine, explaining why they have selected it for us to taste. For some, it may be a wine that reminds them of a special occasion; for others, it may be a regular favourite that they have previously been keeping to themselves.

There will be plenty of time for members to chat about the wines. Who knows, the bold amongst you may even rise to asking our presenters questions about their wine! It should all make for

a great evening of fun, with the opportunity to find out about some hidden gems.

So, who are our volunteers? Well, some couldn't wait to get themselves nominated. Others were press-ganged into submission. Either way, here's the list of those who will take centre stage, all of whom we thank for their enthusiasm and willingness to get involved in the evening:

**Liz Cooper
Alastair Dudley
Richard Ford
Terry Holdsworth
Martha Huckins
Jim King
Brian Mullins
Val Richardson**

I will not steal their thunder by telling you which wines they have chosen. You'll just have to come along and find out for yourselves! As Secretary, I have a few privileges, one of which is to see the list in advance so that I can put together the tasting sheet. I can tell you there are some lovely wines on the list!

Please book in advance for the February tasting, by calling Secretary Keith Cooper on 07976 272822 or e-mailing him at kcooper.medlar@btinternet.com

Bookings are open to fully paid up members only until Saturday 4th February, on a first come, first served basis. Bookings will be accepted from both members and guests from Sunday 5th February onwards, assuming places remain available.

Members - please remember to bring your glasses!



The Whitewater Valley Wine Society website!

www.whitewaterwine.org.uk

Society's 25th Anniversary Dinner – Friday 20th April 2012

As expected, there has been a rapid and enthusiastic response to our main event of the year, the Anniversary Dinner, which will be held on Friday 20th April 2012.

All 54 places were booked within three weeks and the event is now fully booked. If you missed out on booking your places, then we are happy to start a waiting list, in case any further places become available.

All those that booked places will receive their tickets during the next month or so, along with a reminder of their menu choices.

Society AGM: Wednesday 8th February 2012 at 8pm

The Annual General Meeting of the Whitewater Valley Wine Society will be held on Wednesday 8th February 2012 at 8pm at The Raven Hotel in Hook. The agenda and associated papers are included with this newsletter and we ask you to please bring these with you to the meeting. We expect the AGM to last approximately 15-20 minutes.

Your Society is keen to encourage members to join the committee. If you feel you can offer enthusiasm and interesting ideas, please return the completed Nomination Form to the Secretary no later than 12 noon on Monday 6th February 2012.

Members are reminded that your annual subscription of £12.50 becomes due at the AGM. In accordance with Society rules, members should renew their subscription no later than the date of the March meeting, i.e. 14th March 2012. The main benefits of retaining membership are priority booking and a saving of £2.50 at most meetings. Your co-operation in renewing swiftly is appreciated.

Purchase and preparation of food for our tastings

We all enjoy the cheese, bread and nibbles which are provided to accompany our tastings at The Raven. We have a loyal group of volunteers who offer to buy and prepare this food. But it's not fair that they have to do this too often.

For this reason, we are always keen to see other members take their turn and are looking for volunteers to cover our 2012 programme of tastings. If all of our members volunteered, then this task would only come round about once every 7 years! So, please don't wait for Claire to ask you! Please go and see her or another committee member at the next tasting and we will be very pleased to accept your help. Thank you in anticipation.

Tasting report: Tony Hill, Bordeaux and Beyond – report by Barbara Jones

We started our 25th anniversary year by welcoming Tony Hill, owner/Director of Bordeaux and Beyond Ltd, who was presenting to us for the first time. Bordeaux and Beyond is an internet wine retailer specialising in the sourcing and direct importation of wines from independent French vigneron.

This first tasting of 2012 started with an Entre-Deux-Mers, Château De Fontenille 2010 [12.5%, £10.00]. A blend of four grapes, two of which are unusual – muscadelle and sauvignon gris, this pale gold wine had a honeyed nose, was fresh and clean on the palate with hints of fennel, honey and grapefruit in the mouth. A delightful aperitif for balmy days on the patio! The second white wine, a Graves Blanc, Château du Respide Callipyge, 2008 “beautiful buttocks”! [12.5%, £12.50] had more body reflected in its soft golden colour. A blend of sauvignon blanc and semillon [both also present in the first wine], made from old vines and oaked, this was more sophisticated and had a longer finish; toast, vanilla and exotic fruits predominating. Then came a new experience – a claret! In colour it was redder than a rosé and described by the presenter as a rosé with attitude”. The Bordeaux Claret, Château De Fontenille, 2010 [12.5%, £10.00] was certainly different but not to everyone’s liking, being neither one thing nor the other. It is apparently what our ancestors would have consumed as “claret” and is still popular with the French.

After the usual break we were introduced to five red wines. Our first came from Saint Emilion – St. Emilion, La Rose Monturon, 2007 [13%, £13.50]. This blended wine from old vines from Grand Cru plots had a cherry red colour and a slightly veggie nose. With medium tannins, it was very well balanced and a bargain at this price. Our next wine was biodynamic – a Sainte-Foy Bordeaux, Le Petit Champ des Treilles Rouge 2006 [13%, £10.00]. This had a more blackcurrant colour, sharpish tannins and was dry in the mouth, needing food for full appreciation. Opinions as a result were divided! This was followed by a Haut-Médoc, Château Micalet 2003 [12.5%, £12.00] a present day “claret” and a “cru artisan” where all vine growing and wine-making processes are controlled by the producers. This best selling wine had medium/smooth tannins, was clean in the mouth and will last another nine years or so – a “best value” wine! The penultimate wine, a Pomerol, Château l’Ombrière 2007 [12.55, £17.00] was a 90/10 blend of merlot and cabernet franc, with a deep cherry red colour and smooth tannins with hints of fruit; a good “dinner” wine which a visitor to the tasting described as “heaven”! We ended the tasting with a St. Julien, Sarget Gruaud Larose 2004 [13%, £20.00]. A second Grand Cru wine it had medium/ smooth tannins and well balanced fruit - a great accompaniment to roast meats!

Our thanks go to Tony for his ebullient presentation, his enthusiasm being infectious and contagious! Even those present who are rarely impressed by French wines found many they could relate to and really enjoy!

Eating at The Raven – how we found it.....

It may not have crossed your mind that the bar area in The Raven Hotel is open for meals from about 5.30pm onwards. So why not consider eating there before our tastings? It’s a great opportunity to catch up with your friends.

Last month, Liz and I ate in the restaurant at about 6.30pm. The first bit of good news was that our eating time enabled us to take advantage of their “two meals for £9.95”

special offer. Liz had the haddock in batter, with chips and a salad. I had the lasagne with chips and peas. There was plenty of food on our plates and we thought that the quality was good, our meal representing excellent value for money.

The Raven has an extensive menu of traditional favourites, from hearty main courses to lighter snacks, some of which are on their specials menu. So there's something to suit every taste.

Society Tastings & Events for 2012 - all at The Raven Hotel unless stated

Wednesday 14 th March 2012	Chris Horridge – the Concha Y Toro wines of Chile
Wednesday 11 th April 2012	Peter May – wines of South Africa
Friday 20 th April 2012	The Society's 25 th Anniversary Dinner, at Tylney Hall Hotel
Wednesday 9 th May 2012	Keith Grainger, Assoc. of Wine Educators – Italy (Veneto)
Wednesday 13 th June 2012	To be advised
Wednesday 11 th July 2012	To be advised
Friday 10 th August 2012	Society BBQ – venue to be advised
Wednesday 12 th September 2012	Alun Griffiths, Berry Bros & Rudd – Burgundy
Wednesday 10 th October 2012	Trevor Elliott, Assoc. Of Wine Educators – Portugal
Wednesday 14 th November 2012	To be advised
Wednesday 12 th December 2012	Society's Christmas Tasting

Farnham Wine Festival: Saturday 10th March 2012

Many of our members know Brian Davis, who is a member of the Association of Wine Educators and for many years has played a key role in organising the Farnham Wine Festival. Brian has sent us details of this year's event, which we feel sure some of our members will wish to attend. Please purchase your own tickets and make your own arrangements to get there. However, it is helpful for us to know who intends to go along, so we know who to look out for.

The 3rd Farnham Wine Festival will take place on Saturday 10th March 2012 at the University for the Creative Arts in Farnham (located at Falkner Road - behind Waitrose Car Park). Billed as a "fun wine tasting event with a difference", guests will be treated to a tasting of up to 80 wines, served with speciality meats, cheeses and bread, accompanied by live music – in the form of classical guitarist, Pete Black.

Local and independent wine merchants supporting the event will include Imbibros of Farnham, The General Wine Company, Ricco's Wines of Liss, Wines @ West End, Caviste @ Newlyn Wine Shop and Berry Bros & Rudd.

Tickets for the event which will run from 4.00pm until 9.00pm must be bought in advance from www.farnhamwinefestival.co.uk. A donation from the sale of tickets will be made to the Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice in Farnham. Free parking is available to ticket holders at the University Car Park.

For further information and to buy tickets, please go to www.farnhamwinefestival.co.uk

***Please don't forget to book for this month's tasting! To book, please call
Keith Cooper on 07976 272822 or e-mail him at
kcooper.medlar@btinternet.com***

Members - please remember to bring your glasses!