



Next meeting: Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January  
7:30pm start

West Surrey Wine Society  
<http://www.westsurreywinesociety.org.uk>

January 2009

## Quality wines from South Africa

We welcome Keith Cooper (Secretary of the Whitewater Valley Wine Society and seasoned presenter) to take us through a range of quality wines from South Africa. Keith also has an ongoing relationship with Holiday Inn Hotels who commission him to run competitive tastings for their staff attending team building events.

The wines presented by Keith show the diverse range of varieties which are now grown in South Africa and will include some of the award winning wines which are now hitting the world market.

Springfield Estate - Sauvignon Blanc 2008 (Region: Robertson)	Warwick Estate - Trilogy 2005 (Region: Stellenbosch)
Klein Constantia - Riesling 2007 (Region: Constantia)	Tulbach Mountain Vineyards Viktoria 2005 (Region: Tulbach)
Simonsig - Chenin Blanc 2007 (Region: Stellenbosch)	Hamilton Russell - Pinot Noir 2005 (Region: Hermanus)
Beyerskloof - Pinotage Reserve 2006 (Region: Stellenbosch)	Klein Constantia - Vin de Constance 2004 (Region: Constantia)

## WSWS EGM 19<sup>th</sup> January 2009

An Extra-ordinary General Meeting (EGM) will be held at 7.30 pm before the normal monthly meeting on Monday, 19 January 2009 to consider the Society's financial position.

The cost of maintaining the Society has risen markedly over the past year, primarily due to an increase in the rent charged by Blacknest. Also, we no longer have a substantial reserve due to our very successful Anniversary Party. Therefore it is necessary for our income to increase. It should be noted that neither the subscription nor the attendance fee have changed since the Society's foundation 20 years ago, despite there being considerable inflation in all aspects of costs (venues, wines, speakers) over the intervening period.

In order to meet this increase, the Committee proposes that the annual subscription and attendance fee be adjusted by one of the following options:

Option 1: The subscription is increased to £20 and the attendance fee is increased to £12.

Option 2: The subscription remains the same at £15 and the attendance fee is increased to £13.

July suffers from few attendees - the Committee propose that meetings should not be held in July.

The cost for guests attending meetings will increase to £15 per meeting.

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## November Meeting Report

### Bryan Buckingham - Sherry Institute of Spain

A huge crowd of members plus guests from Alton, Selbourne and Winchester Wine Societies welcomed our old friend and favourite speaker Bryan Buckingham and his wife Jenny. To our surprise it turned out to be a historic occasion as Bryan announced that this would be his last ever tasting – an honour for WSWS but also rather sad that we would not enjoy their company again. (However, knowing Bryan, don't bet on there not being just one more – and I'm sure he'll not be too far away from the London Wine Fair in May).

Bryan's devotion to the "world's finest wine" cannot be doubted as he has been giving tastings for 45 years and founded the Sherry Institute in 1982. He first visited WSWS a mere 17 years ago in 1991 and we have enjoyed his huge knowledge of Sherry, the Jerez region and its bodegas on at least 4 occasions.

Bryan's talks are always packed with interest and delivered in his gently amusing anecdotal and unassuming style. He took us through the history – first recorded wine production in 1100BC by the Phoenicians, the Romans vini, vidi and drank it, liking it so much they shipped it back to Rome, and even the Moors allowed production to continue for their 500 year rule (our word sherry comes from the Anglicisation of the Moorish word Sherish for Jerez); we have been drinking it since at least Queen Elizabeth 1's time – Falstaff loved his 'sack'. We heard about the soils, how it is made – there are only 2 basic sherry styles, Fino and Oloroso, - the solera system, the mysterious properties of the flor, fortification and what makes it unique.

Sadly, although the UK is the biggest overseas market taking 20 million of the 100 million bottles made each year, we lack Falstaff's enthusiasm and Sherry, along with other fortified wines, is struggling to make sales in the face of its 'elderly cleric and aged aunt' image. The problem? - most sherries are not kept or served properly so most people's first experience is probably a lukewarm oxidised Fino that has been open for weeks or an over-sweet sticky cream that cost a fiver in a supermarket.

But the sherries we tasted were superb. All the Sherry Institute's tasting samples are anonymous and selected each year by a committee in Jerez to represent each style of sherry- which meant we could not go out and buy the ones we liked. We started with a Manzanilla and progressed through Fino, nut dry Amontillado and Oloroso, the unusual Palo Cotardo, to the sweeter styles of Medium and Dark Cream. The sweeter styles are achieved by blending with Muscat for the pale creams and Pedro Ximenez with dry Oloroso for the darker. The Dark Cream – not my favourite style - was surprisingly elegant and not at all cloying. We finished of course with a Pedro Ximenez - pure prunes and treacle. Interestingly PX is not fermented – the grapes are dried in the sun, pressed and the juice immediately fortified. Apart from the first 2 wines, they all packed 18-19% alcohol. My favourites – the Manzanilla and Oloroso.

Most people drink sherry as an aperitif and few realise what an excellent accompaniment it makes for foods of all types. Hopefully the tapas that Kim had organised showed how well it goes with food – so why not be brave and serve sherries throughout your next dinner party? And never forget the value for money – far better than table wines. £8 – 12 gets you really good quality, £20'ish superb.

A standing ovation at the end of the evening will have left Bryan and Jenny in no doubt about their popularity, and our appreciation for making the long return drive from Rushden (Northampton) yet again.

### *Christmas party 2008*

Our Christmas party at Blacknest was attended by 28 members. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, tasted some very good wines with excellent food, and through the raffle, raised £100 for charity to boot!

## *Diary notes*

<b>Make a note of the following dates, (WSWS <u>always</u> meets on 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month unless stated) mystery pre-meeting wine at 7:30 onward; meeting commences at 8pm</b>	
<b>19<sup>th</sup> January 2009</b> <b>starts 7:30pm with EGM</b>	Quality Wines from South Africa  Keith Cooper, Secretary of Whitewater Valley Wine Society. He is very knowledgeable on this wine area and regularly presents to the Whitewater Wine Society on various wine areas
<b>16<sup>th</sup> February 2009</b>	Jaboulet Reborn!  Anne Helene from Jaboulet and Amy Mathews of Liberty Wines.
<b>16<sup>th</sup> March 2009</b>	Fine Wines of Burgundy  Richard Household - Managing Director of Revelstoke Wines
<b>20<sup>th</sup> April 2009</b>	New and exciting developments in Portuguese Wines  Tasting led by Raymond Reynolds a specialist in Portuguese wines

<p><b>Tasting notes....</b></p> <p>Many of us will have heard the story of the guy who was in a waterlogged, boggy marsh area and up to his armpits in alligators. It was difficult for him to remember that his very reason for being there was to drain the swamp.</p> <p>WSWS members too are in that situation. With costs rising on all fronts, we have to remain focussed that as a wine society, we exist in order that we can share the experience of tasting quality wines that we would not normally buy – either because they are unknown to us, or are out of our everyday “quaffing” price range.</p> <p>Speakers are tightening their belts. Where we used to be able to get enlightened speakers for free, this is becoming far more difficult – with some MW’s now charging up to £400. Wine cost and accommodation are on top of that!</p> <p>As of today, the pound sits at about 1 euro. That means that European wine is 40% more expensive this year than last year. Putting that in context, if we spent £7.50 a bottle in 2008, the same wine will soon be costing £10.50.</p>	<p>To stay in our budget, and spend £7.50 today, we would be buying wine to taste that would have cost £5.35 in 2007.</p> <p>When considering the EGM this month, ask yourself the question – do you attend a wine society to taste wines that on average, cost £5 per bottle? In other words (and to be blunt), do members want WSWS to be a Society that entertains, educates, and exposes its members to new (and some stunning) wines, or simply be a gathering of people tasting inexpensive, and potentially just “run of the mill, supermarket” wines?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">David &amp; Kim</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">MOORE</p> </div>
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### **Who's who in the Committee?**

Graham C - The money man

Peter - Events co-ordinator

Sallie - Committee Chairman

Kim & David - Editors (Executive & “still” in-training)

Geoffrey - Secretary & all things snail

Additional help:

Graham P (The web master “tekkie”)

**WEST SURREY WINE SOCIETY  
EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING  
7.30 p.m. 19<sup>th</sup> January 2009  
BLACKNEST GOLF CLUB**

**AGENDA**

- 1. To receive financial Update from the treasurer;**
- 2. To make recommendations regarding future annual and monthly membership fees;**
- 3. A.O.B.**

Members unable to attend the EGM should complete and return a signed proxy form to Geoffrey Matthews by Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January, stating their preference between options 1 and 2

**PROXY FORM**

FOR

AGAINST

a) Subscription Option 1: The subscription is increased to £20 and the attendance fee is increased to £12.

b) Subscription Option 2: The subscription remains the same at £15 and the attendance fee is increased to £13.

c) July meeting - Cancellation of future meetings in July

Signed

Name: