



News

WSWS

West Surrey Wine Society

<http://www.westsurreywinesociety.org.uk>

Next meeting: Monday 21st July
7:30pm for 8.00pm

July 2008

Wines of Craggy Range Estate – Hawkes Bay New Zealand

Following on from our trip in June to the old prison island of Australia, we stay in the southern hemisphere for July, and take a relatively short hop across the Tasman Sea to New Zealand's North Island and Hawkes Bay. Michael Henley will take us through the wines from Craggy Range – situated to the south east of the town of Hastings.



Craggy Range is a winery to watch. Its establishment in 1998 combined the financial muscle of American industrialist Terry Peabody with the viticultural skills of Steve Smith MW. Craggy Range quickly developed a reputation for quality in all facets of its operation. The winery is focused on the production of single vineyard wines, mainly grown on its own Hawkes Bay and Marlborough vineyards. Its wine making philosophy is based on careful vineyard selection and management, with an emphasis on quality at all stages of the production process.

Make a note of the following dates, (WSWS always meets on 3rd Monday of the month unless stated) mystery pre-meeting wine at 7:30 onward; meeting commences at 8pm

21st July 2008

Wines of Craggy Range Estate, Hawkes Bay New Zealand, presented by Michael Henley

Saturday 16th August - THE BIG ONE ! – 6.30pm start

What? 20th anniversary meeting of WSWS

Where: Quinnettes, Churt (<http://www.churt-pc.gov.uk/quinnettes.htm>)

Tickets: £30 each – see menu at end of newsletter

Special food; special wines (if it's the 20th anniversary they **HAVE** to be special)

Special guest speaker – Alun Griffiths MW (Director of Wine, Berry Brothers & Rudd)

To help us to plan numbers, please complete the tear off slip at the end of the newsletter and hand it to a committee member at the next meeting. Guests and potential new members are welcome, as are any ex-members who want to re-join.

The July meeting will be the last opportunity to book tickets – so remind your friends and think about bringing along some prospective members. Tickets can still be reserved at the July meeting.

Dress code for the evening is jackets & ties for the men, (and something “appropriate” for the ladies)

Carriages 10:30pm

| | |
|---|--|
| Make a note of the following dates, (WSWS <u>always</u> meets on 3rd Monday of the month unless stated) mystery pre-meeting wine at 7:30 onward; meeting commences at 8pm | |
| 15th September 2008 | Chile on the up presented by David Dickinson |
| 20th October 2008 | Unusual wine varieties from around the world David Gandorge MW will present from Waitrose |
| 17th November 2008 | Sherry & Tapas Bryan Buckingham returns from The Sherry Institute |

June Meeting Report

Do Oz Wines Need Terroir? - Angela Reddin

Reflections on an amazing presentation

Angela proved to be one feisty presenter – taking our question as her personal challenge. The result was a really well thought out presentation and one of the liveliest meetings we have had for a long time.

Terroir may have been the main topic, but we covered a huge range – bottle closures and how to open a stelvin closure, Australian drought and the conflicting water rights of cotton farmers versus wine producers, why only men are allowed to foot crush – because they can pee over the edge of the vat and keep treading, the merits of US, French and German oak barrels, coping with high alcohol wines – easy, just drink less (strangled gasps of horror) and loads of information on climate, soils, geology not to mention wine making. A hugely informative and entertaining evening.

First though, she threw the challenge back to the class – what did we understand by terroir. After some umming and ahhing we sort of got it right, at least for France – ‘the marriage of soil, variety and climate’. But the Australians are more complex, adding minerals, drainage, rain fall and sun hours to the equation.

Until very recently vines were planted with little thought to such subtleties as terroir, for example in the Hunter Valley they were all planted on the very hot valley floor and they have only recently moved cultivation to the hills where the temperatures are lower and the loamier soils more moisture retentive. But the move was motivated by drought and the realisation that this is better terroir has only followed; we tasted the Allandale Chardonnay which was yummy, so a good move for whatever reason.

Drought is the key driver in Australian wine production at the moment and over-rides the finer points. Their latest thinking is focused on finding ways to live with it, for example focusing on heat resistant varieties such as those from Spain and Portugal, such as the Fat'n Skinny Rose which was a blend of Tempranillo and Cab Franc, and using yeasts that eat the sugars of very ripe grapes, as for example is the case with the Sandalford Verdelho which was surprisingly crisp and gentle for a 14% wine, or picking earlier.

Terroir, said Angela, pits the purist against the commercial. She pointed out that most Australian wines that the market knows and loves are made from blends drawn from different soils rather than one area – they are consistent, people like them and they sell well. The Tim Smith MGS was an example and it was one of the most popular of the evening. She suggested that were the wines to be made and sold individually they would only appeal to a minority.

My conclusion was that Angela was saying that Oz wines had been grown with scant regard for terroir for years with great success. In her words – it works so why fix it, and anyway can the growers afford to produce wines that might appeal to the purist but not to the commercial market. The inescapable answer to the exam question is no, Oz wines do not need terroir but they do need water and if the two combine then I guess both sides will be vindicated.

Meeting review by Peter Smith

Who's who in the Committee?

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Peter Godwin | Our leader | Peter Smith | Events co-ordinator |
| Graham Cook | The NEW money man | David & Kim Finch | Editors in training |
| Sallie Payne | Membership Secretary | Additional help: | |
| Geoffrey Matthews | Secretary & all things snail-mail | Graham Parlett | (The web master tekkie) |

In the Vineyard: a monthly look at what is going on in the Northern Hemisphere

July is for – – spraying. Some of the biggest problems in viticulture come in the form of fungal diseases, promoted by rain and humidity. How to spray is more a science than an art – whether it be by hand spraying, or the use of mechanisation, right up to the extremes of aeroplanes and helicopters – and partly depends on the terrain.

For those who prefer the indoor activities, the fine wines from 2 years ago are now ready for bottling, followed by years of anticipation, delight, and some regret (opened too early or too late maybe).

Sampling notes

As the summer comes closer, and we start to think of vacations (relaxing in some far flung place sipping the nectar of the grape), spare a moment or two to think about all those who fill up the glass over and over again... no, not the waiter on holiday, but the fellow member who serves wine at WSWs meetings.

Alongside organising speakers (and introducing them / offering a vote of thanks), “pouring” is considered by many to be a daunting task. Well let us dispel all such poppycock – it is not an art but a science – where the cunning objective is to get back to your own seat with sufficient remnants in a bottle of some yet to be discovered gem – on the pretext of wanting to study the label.

So at the next meeting, why not volunteer to pour... just watch out for sediment and drips

David & Kim (editors in training)



Back issues

The Editors (Ed: in training please) are trying to build a comprehensive set of newsletters going back to the year dot (that's 1988). Each month we'll highlight a few years, and if members still have copies (preferably electronic) we'd be grateful for an e-mail or photo copy. This month we're looking for copies from 2000 & 2001.

Page filling Humour:

Q - Why should you **NEVER** drink German wines quickly?

A – Because you'll get hock ups

Thought for the day – never get too drunk on white burgundy – you're likely to behave chablisly

20th Anniversary Party Menu

Starter - (served at the tables).

Smoked Salmon with Brown Bread and Butter garnished with lemon and dill.

Main Course. (Buffet).

Honey Glazed Ham on the Bone - sliced and garnished with oranges.

Sirloin Beef

Organic Salmon Fillets

Salads.

Warm Buttered and minted potatoes.

Mixed Green Salad.

Tomato and Fresh Basil

Apple Celery and Walnut in Yoghurt.

Desserts.

Pavlova with Raspberries and Strawberries.

Chocolate Roulades.

French Apple Tarte

Fresh Fruit Salad. all served with pouring cream.

Coffee and Tea with chocolates.

20th anniversary party Saturday 16th August 6.30pm

Please reserve tickets for the 20th anniversary party at £30 each.

I attach a cheque / cash for the full balance, total value £.....

Name (please print clearly):.....

Contact telephone number:.....