



Wales and West Federation of Winemaking Circles

Newsletter

April 2010

From the Editor's Wine Glass

Not long to go now. There are just a few more weeks before we are all dashing down the M5 to Sand Bay for the 2010 Wales and West Festival.

No doubt many of you are polishing your wines (and your bottles), others will be trying out their jams, chutneys and Victoria Sponges on long-suffering (but very supportive) families while more will be racking their brains for a poster to publicise the 2011 Festival, all in preparation for the Show.

It's all good fun and the latest news from Bridget is that entries are now coming in thick and fast, so don't delay, get your entry form in the post today.

Not so good is the news that another circle, Forest Farms Winemakers, has disbanded due to a decline in members.

There must be a few more that are down to around 20 members and wondering about the future, while at the same time there are circles who appear to be healthy and thriving.

What is the secret of success? Is it having evenings such as the French-themed dinner organized by South Gloucestershire, and featured in this Newsletter? Or is it being mainly a wine appreciation circle with the wine makers and brewers forming a minority group?

I don't know, but whatever it is we need to attract a younger element (i.e. 40-somethings) into our circles.

Suggestions please, from those circles who have found the secret.

Also in this Newsletter you will find:

- The latest news about the 2010 Festival;
- News from Bath, Forest Farm, South Gloucestershire and Timsbury Wine Circles and the Torquay Tiplers.

(P.S. I have got a new printer, so hopefully the quality of the photographs will be better now.)

News from the Federation

Festival 2010

For Your Information

Everything appears to be going smoothly for this year's Festival (touch wood!). After a slow start, attendance numbers are up to 430, which is slightly fewer than last year, but at the time of writing entries are still a lot short of last year, in spite of a late surge. So, if you have not yet sent in your entries, do so NOW.

As usual, your chalets will be available from 3 p.m. but you are of course welcome to arrive before then as the Leaf and Pastry café will be open and if it's a fine day you can take a walk along the beach. Also, the Federation's Information Stand will be open to answer your queries and for the sale of tickets for the tastings.

There will be three tastings during the weekend, including one on Friday evening. Tickets are limited to 100 for each tasting so buy early to avoid disappointment.

The Gala Dinner is back to Saturday evening, so don't forget your posh frocks and suits.

With the exception of the Keith Box Jazzband, all entertainment in both the Ballroom and the Harlequin Bar will be provided by the Sand Bay entertainments team.

This will include a Big Band Night on Sunday in the Ballroom, so start practising your jives and jitterbugs.

Details of all the weekend's events will be included in the programme that you will be given when you collect your chalet keys.

As in previous years, there will be a guest beer available at the bars. This year it is St Austell 'Tribute' and if the pattern of previous years continues there will not be very much left by closing time on Sunday.

Once again, the Committee has arranged for a photographer to be present during the weekend, so look out for the photographer for your circle photos.

Commercial Drinks and Food

Please be aware that the consumption of commercial drinks, including soft drinks, and food is not permitted in the public areas unless they were purchased from Sand Bay Leisure Resort.

The Sand Bay management reserves the right to remove any such products believed to have been bought elsewhere and your co-operation will be gratefully appreciated.

Tombola

There will of course be the usual Tombola stand and Carol has

asked me to remind you to include something for the Tombola when you pack for the weekend.

Charitable Donation

This year's charity will be 'Help for Heroes'.

Open Forum and Annual General Meeting

The Open Forum and the Annual General Meeting of the Wales and West Federation will be held on the Monday morning.

Representatives of all circles are welcome to attend both but only representatives of **affiliated** circles will be allowed to vote at the AGM.

Any Questions?

As always, if you have any questions about the weekend, talk to the Committee members on the Federation's Information Stand. If they cannot help, they should know someone who can.

Member Circle Contacts

I have not been told of any changes to member circle contacts since the last Newsletter.

News from the Circles

Bath Wine Circle

Bath Wine Circle held their Annual General Meeting on 26th March 2010. Helen Ashton and Don Smith were re-elected as Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Geoff Slegg is the new President replacing Monica Abel who came to the end of her two year term in office, and Vernon Groves is Vice-President.

Stan Matthews was re-elected as Chairman and Doug Webber as Vice-Chairman at the first committee meeting.

There is no specified Charity this year as the circle will be raising funds towards its own 50th Anniversary celebrations.

The Halloween Dance will be held on 30th October 2010 and the Annual Wine Show on 13th November 2010. More information will be available nearer to the events.

Forest Farm Winemakers

Jean May has told me that Forest Farm Winemakers have now disbanded.

They are very sad that this has had to happen, but like most clubs they have fallen victim to a decrease in members due to various reasons

and now refer to the few that are left as a social club that meets in each others' homes each month.

South Gloucestershire Wine Circle

The South Gloucestershire Wine Circle Treasurer, Neil Clouter, and his father-in-law David Bateman are gaining quite a reputation for wining and dining the members.

Their latest offering in January was a French-themed evening where Neil prepared a fantastic three course meal and David talked us through six wine tastings which accompanied the meal. And all this for £6 a head.

Here is the menu for the evening:

Potage Parmentier
Leek and Potato Soup

Pate de Campagne
Country Terrine

Daube a la Provencale
Slow cooked beef in red wine

Porc a la Normande
Pork cooked in cider and finished with Creme Fraiche and Calvados

Wales and West Newsletter April 2010

Clafoutis ax Cerises

Cherries marinated in Kirsch and
baked in a sweet batter

Terrine Aux Deux Chocolats

White and milk chocolate mousse

Crepe Suzette

Pancakes served with an orange
sauce

Porto avec Fromage

Port and cheese

Everyone had a great time and is looking forward to next year's Bistro Britannia event.

Here are a couple of pictures from the evening. The first shows the circle members waiting with anticipation for the treats to come; the second (over the page) is of Carol Coombs asking the kitchen staff what has happened to her starter.





Timsbury Wine Society

Timsbury held their Annual Ron Ward Wine Match on Saturday 6th March with 4 clubs taking part.

Keynsham & Salford won the Ron Ward cup. Warmley came 2nd winning the Faraday cup. The “Best in Show” was won by Keynsham and Salford for their Rosé so they took away the Silver Salver. Timsbury were joint 4th with Bath.

Congratulations to all who entered and thanks go to Wally Doman for judging.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable night, with dancing to *Atlantic Crossing*, as *Tobacco Road* was unable to come because of illness. Again all our thanks go to these wine circles, without which we

would have no wine match, and to family and friends for supporting us.

Our last meeting was a talk and slide presentation on Action on Disability and Development. Mike Evans gave a true picture as they help and support disabled people in the poorest countries of the world as they strive to find their own answers to the problems they face.

They lack access to education, healthcare, transport, recreation, a livelihood, democratic decision, social inclusion and respect is an everyday reality for these disabled people. ADD helps by building up active groups of disabled people from village level to international level, by providing funding, information and training so that

they can represent themselves. It is a registered charity, so a donation of £50 was given for this worthwhile cause.

In April we are having Terry Western, a National judge, coming to give us some tips on our homemade wine and what judges are looking for as well. It should be a fun evening and plenty of wine drinking. All details of our programme are on our website.

Torquay Tipplers

John Coleman has sent me the following:

'The Torquay tipplers have recently returned from their weekend at the Palace Hotel at Paignton.

102 wine makers from 10 wine circles enjoyed a very happy three night stay with Dinner Bed and

Breakfast and first class entertainment provided by the hotel.

On Friday evening the group enjoyed as fancy dress competition in which 13 members competed, displaying excellent costumes on a 'British Theme' as suggested by Charlton Kings Wine Circle (see photo below).

The Charity Bucket raised £200 which was donated to The Butterfly Garden, which was chosen by The Reddings Wine Circle and which gives support to young people with learning difficulties.

For next year, Brockworth Wine circle have chosen 'Allo Allo' for the Fancy Dress and Hucclecote Wine Circle have nominated the Air Ambulance for the Charity.

Thank you for your support.'



Well that is it for this issue. I hope you have found something to interest you, maybe even to inspire you to tell the rest of the Federation about the events in your circle.

Don't forget I can accept digital photos of the goings-on in your circle by email. Please send them, in JPEG format, to the email address below.

My thanks for their contributions to:

- Doug Webber of Bath
- Jean May of Forest Farm Winemakers
- Jeff Saunders of South Gloucestershire
- Wendy Treasure of Timsbury
- John Coleman of Torquay Tipplers

The next issue of the Newsletter is due in July 2010. Please send your news to me:

Trevor Nicholson
Sunnycroft
Symonds Yat West
Ross-on-Wye
Herefordshire
HR9 6BJ

Email: trev.nick@virgin.net