



The Newsletter of the Metropolitan Wine and Food Society of Sydney Inc.

Published for the information of the members, and friends, of the Metropolitan Wine and Food Society of Sydney Inc.

Vol 1 No 2 — September, October, November 2013



At the Metropolitan President's Dinner 13 July 2013, the Federation of Wine and Food Societies of Australia President, Janet Barton, presented Ian Smalls with the FWFS Award — Medal and Certificate for his outstanding contributions to the Society



Ian Smalls joins previous Society Awardees Ian Arnold, Trevor Gibson, Monty Smith and Steve Leibeskind — and also Murray Fletcher, Ross Higginson and Mary Arnold.

Inside this Newsletter

Programme of the Society Christmas @ Aqua Dining P 2
Words from the President
Editor's Note

President's Dinner 2013— P 3
Food Report

President's Dinner 2013— P 4
Wine Report

From the Wine Master — P5
In Praise of Pinot
MWFSS Committee

From the Federation P6
A day in Champagne -
Trevor Gibson

A Visit to Scotland - Murray P7
Fletcher
The Camerons in the
Hunter—Wine by David,
Food by Penny

Cruising and Dining - Carole P8
and David Yeomans

A Day in Champagne cont.

Metropolitan Wine and Food Society of Sydney Inc

Registered No. Y13780.23

Founded: 22 July 1977

Address: 52 Woodhill Street Castle Hill NSW 2154

Contacts: President Trevor Gibson 042 7311 456 Secretary Ian Smalls (02) 9634 5925

SOCIETY PROGRAMME FUNCTIONS AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

September 2013

**Wednesday 11 @
10.30am**

**Committee Meeting @ the home of Ian
and Carolyn Smalls**

Sunday 29

**Spring Luncheon—at the home of
Diane and Jim Rolls, Beecroft**

December 2013

Sunday 1

Christmas Lunch @ Aqua Dining

January 2014

TBA

Informal Picnic

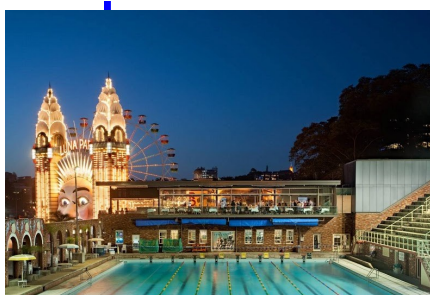


Christmas @ Aqua Dining 2013

Following the undoubted success of our Christmas Luncheon at Aqua Dining in 2012 we will return there for Christmas 2013 on **Sunday 1 December**.

Please mark this date in your diary now.

aqua
DINING



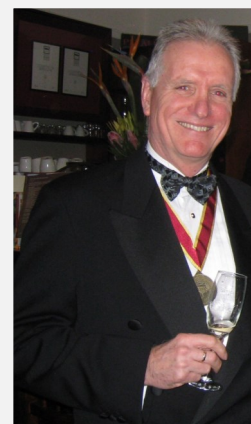
Please submit your contributions for the MWFSS Newsletter to the Editor, Peggy Sanders, by Friday 22 November 2013.

All contributions, and photographs, will be gratefully received. Items will be published over the name of the contributor, and references should be cited and acknowledged.

**psanders@ozemail.com.au
0413 481 854**

Words from the President:

Congratulations to Ian Smalls for his being awarded a Federation Award for his outstanding contributions to the Society, conferred upon him on Saturday 13 July 2013 at the President's Dinner by Janet Barton, the FWFS President.



Apart from his contributions in an official capacity as Secretary over nine years and as Food Master for two years, over the 14 years of his membership Ian has actively worked behind the scenes to for example, arrange transport to our functions and to prepare food for our self catered lunches. Ian has always been very generous in donating his time and talents to benefit the Society and he is a worthy recipient of the Medal.

This edition of the *Newsletter* features the recent President's Dinner at Courtney's Brasserie. Given that the following day was Bastille Day, we focused on French wine and food and all our expectations for a great evening were met. Executive Chef and owner Paul Kuipers designed a well balanced degustation menu for us and this was matched by wines sourced from the Society's Cellar. Janet Barton was our guest for the evening to confer Ian's Award. I can thoroughly recommend Courtney's as the closest thing you will see to fine dining in the Parramatta area.

Also circulated with this *Newsletter* is a short 'members' questionnaire'. I urge you to respond to this so that the Committee has feedback about how you feel about Society functions and what we can do to improve them. This feedback is important so that future functions are of the type and diversity that reflect your preferences, encourage participation and perhaps attract new members.

Our next function is the **Spring Luncheon on Sunday 29 September at the home of Jim and Dee Rolls**. I hope to see you there.

**Trevor Gibson
042 7311 456**

President's Dinner 13 July, 2013

Courtney's Brasserie, Parramatta

President: Trevor Gibson Executive Chef: Paul Kuipers
Wine Master: Ian Arnold Food Master: Penny Cameron

Food Report

This year's dinner was held at Courtney's Brasserie, Parramatta where 21 people attended in Courtney's very comfortable private room. As it was close to Bastille Day the menu was in French and was a 5 course degustation.

Canapes

Rillettes de porc avec oignons marines, salade de raifort et sauce remoulade

Ballotine of duck

Pate champignons a la grecque et tarte aux poires et celery-rave.

I liked the mushroom pate the best as the flavours came through strongly. As you can see the canapés were very complex and were just a small mouthful I but went very nicely with the lovely Laurent Perrier champagne.



Degustation Menu

Fromage de chevre avec bebe betterave, vinaigrette de noisette

Goat's cheese and baby beetroot salad with a vinaigrette dressing is fresh, tasty, and always a winner.

Grosses crevettes a l'ail avec soufflé de crevettes et sauce bisque

Beautiful plump king prawns with a delicious prawn soufflé. A mouth melting experience.

Canard a L'orange.

Beautifully cooked, presentation excellent, sauce went well with the wine. In my opinion this was the course of the night.

Tournedos de boeuf avec pate de champignons, pommes pont neuf et sauce bordelaise.

A small piece of very tender steak, mushroom pate and chips. Very tasty.

Dessert Assiette *Crème Brulee, Souffle avec Dacquoise et Glace a la Truffe*

Again a complex and detailed menu, but a most enjoyable one.

Café or The & Petit Fours. This was an interesting and extremely varied menu which would have taken the chef a large amount time to put together. It was well done, and from comments received the dinner was enjoyed by all. The wines were all French and went very well with the food.



Diane Rolls, Food Scribe



President's Dinner 13 July, 2013

Courtney's Brasserie, Parramatta

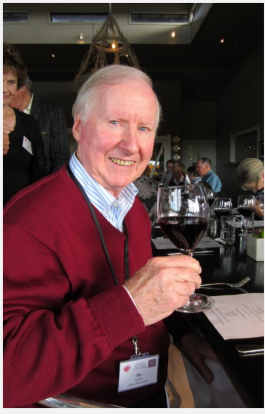
Wine Report

The Society's President's Dinner was held at Courtney's Brasserie, Parramatta for a second year in a row.

The meal was a 5 course degustation on a French theme, and was wonderfully complemented by a fine selection of wines (Principally French) sourced from the Society's cellar.

Wine	Comments
<u>On Arrival</u> Laurent Perrier NV Brut Premier (Tours-sur-Marne). 50% Pinot Noir, 15% Pinot Meunier, 35% Chardonnay	Great nose. Good acid which lingered on the palate. Displayed pleasant bread-y-yeast characteristics. Nice fruit acid balance. Went well with the canapés and was enjoyed by the guests
<u>Degustation</u> <i>Goat's cheese and baby beetroot.</i> 2005 Sancerre Vieilles Vignes (Roger et Didier Raimbault). 35-50 year old vines. (Long time on Lees)	Pale lemon colour. Herbaceous nose. Very dry on palate. Fresh acid. Good example of French Sauvignon Blanc. 3 bottles used. 1 bottle showed signs of oxidation that was evident on the nose, and reflected as being dead on the palate.
<i>King Prawn with prawn soufflé and bisque.</i> 2007 Puligny-Montrachet "Les Charmes" domain Alain Chavy (Bourgogne)	Generous fruit. Great acid. Lime/citrus characters with peach overtones. Long on palate. Good food wine and went very well with course.
<i>Duck à l'orange</i> 2007 Morey St Denis. 1er Cru. "Aux Charmes" Domain Pierre Amiot et Fils. (Bourgogne)	Elegant, balanced wine with lingering acid on the finish, a characteristic of red Burgundies. Great structure and subtle tannins. Exhibited flavours in the cherry spectrum. Considered by many as being the wine of the night.
<i>Tournedos of Beef pate of mushrooms and sauce bordelaise</i> 2006 Chateau Batailley. 5 th growth Grand Cru. (Pauillac). 70% Cab Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 5% Cab Franc.	Excellent balanced wine from a good year. Soft fruit on middle palate. Subdued fine soft tannins on finish. Expected to develop further over the next 5-10 years.
<u>Dessert Assiette</u> <i>Cream Brulee, Soufflé, Icecream</i> 2005 Chateau Haura (Cérons-near border Barsac)	Fine elegant Sauternes with non-cloying touch of sweetness. Excellent dessert wine.
<i>Coffee, Tea & Petit Fours</i> 1997 Stanton & Killeen Vintage Port (Rutherglen)	Raisin and cherry flavours. Still drinking young and is expected to develop over next 20 years. A nice finish to the evening.

Jim Rolls, Wine Scribe



From the Wine Master:

IN PRAISE OF PINOT NOIR

It is obligatory when writing about Pinot Noir, to attest to its greatness as the variety which produces the exquisite red wines of Burgundy — those produced in the vineyards of the Cote de Beaune and Cote de Nuits, situated a short distance between Beaune and Dijon. Serena Sutcliffe is of the view that the vines probably first came to this region around 600BC from the Greek settlement of Marseilles.



The Metropolitan WFS of Sydney was quick to embrace Burgundian wines. A Clos de la Roche (Grand Cru) 1962 was served by the writer at the Formation Dinner on 30 January 1977. The majority of Presidents' Dinners since then have included red Burgundy in the wine list. They have also been included consistently in the Society Cellar inventory following the

September 1978.

James Busby introduced the variety into Australia in 1832 following his European tour, when collecting cuttings from some of the premium wine regions of France including Burgundy, and specifically the vineyard of Clos Vougeot. Some vines found their way to the Hunter Valley and subsequently, the legendary Maurice O'Shea produced many magnificent blends using Pinot Noir. Within memory (of some of us) Pinot Noir featured in local wines, such as Seppelt Chalambar Burgundy, which included — in the blend — Pinot Noir from the Wahgunyah vineyard.

The Hunter Valley has not proven to be ideal for producing Pinot Noir as a single varietal. An exception is the continued production since the mid 70's of Tyrrell's Vat 6 Pinot Noir; which maybe evinces an overlay of Hunter Valley terroir. Australia is blessed with a number of regions which have proven to be highly suitable for production of premium Pinot Noir; Pinot Noir has established itself as a single varietal, particularly over the past decade in Tasmania, Adelaide Hills and in a number of Victorian regions: Geelong, Mornington Peninsula and Yarra Valley (some members will remember our Society visit to the latter two areas a few years ago).



Varietal integrity exists in well made wines from these regions: they show attractive mid red hues, stunning fragrant and inviting primary fruit bouquet (redolent of violets, and various berries) medium body weight with balanced acidity and very fine tannins. Both French and Australian wines are enhanced by liberal breathing before consumption. Complexity develops with age, though longevity of Australian wines is somewhat less than French.

Here are some recommended current release Pinot Noir wines you can try:

Geelong: Bannockburn 2009 (\$53.00); Scotchmans Hill 2011 (\$30.00); Shadowfax 2011 (\$33.00)
Mornington: Paringa Peninsular 2011 (\$24.00); Stonier 2011 (\$20.70); Kooyong 2008 (\$41.90)
Yarra Valley: Coldstream Hills 2011 (\$28.00); DeBortoli 2010 (\$30.00); Diamond Valley 2010 (\$23.00)
Tasmania: Stefano Lubiana 2011 (\$37.00); Pooles Rock 2009 (\$40.00); Pipers Brook 2010 (\$37.00)
Adelaide Hills: Nepenthe 2012 (\$19.00); Riposte (Tim Knappstein) 2010 (\$30.00)

Readers will be well aware that New Zealand is similarly well endowed with excellent Pinot Noir regions such as Martinborough, Marlborough and Central Otago — but that is for another time.

Ian Arnold, Vice President Wine Master

Office Bearers and Committee 2013-2014

President: Trevor Gibson
 Vice President Wine Master: Ian Arnold
 Vice President Food Master: Lorraine Plues
 Secretary: Ian Smalls
 Treasurer: Carole Yeomans
 Wine Scribe: Jim Rolls
 Food Scribe: Diane Rolls
 Committee Member—Wine: David Cameron
 Committee Member—Food: Carolyn Smalls
 Federation of Wine and Food Societies of Australia Councillor: Ian Arnold
 Public Officer: Lorraine Plues
 Honorary Auditor: Steve Wimmer



Federation News:

Message from the Federation President:

The next Federation of Wine and Food Societies of Australia Convention is to be hosted by the Wine and Food Society of Hobart. They have designed a very exciting weekend in March 2014, that showcases some of the best wine and food in Hobart and the surrounds.

In addition you can chose to come a few days earlier and/or stay a few days later to have guided tours around some of Tasmania's most well know and boutique wine regions. The Pre Tour is around Southern Tasmania using Hobart as the base. The Post Tour focuses on the East Coast and Northern Tasmania based out of Launceston. The 2 enclosed brochures give you details about the Convention, the tours and contact details to get more information and to book.

I look forward to meeting you in Tasmania next year.

Kind regards

**Janet Barton, President,
Federation of Wine and Food Societies of
Australia Inc.**

The **FWFSA Convention 2014** 'Sparkling Tasmania' will be held in Hobart from **Friday 21 to Sunday 23 March 2014**.

The Pre tour featuring Southern Tasmania (based in Hobart) is from **Wednesday 19 to Friday 21 March**; and the Post tour travelling rom Hobart to the East Coast (based in Launceston) is from **Monday 24 to Wednesday 26 March 2014** inclusive. Fly out of Launceston Thursday 27 March 2014.

The brochure for the Convention including the registration form and the brochure with information about accommodation options are circulated with this Newsletter.

Ian Arnold, Federation Vice President and I have already registered and booked our accommodation, and intend to go on the pre-tour — we would love to have other members of the Society join us!

**Peggy Sanders
Federation Secretary**

A Day in Champagne — Trevor and Jenny Gibson



During our trip to Europe late last year Jenny and I were fortunate to spend a day in Champagne on a personalised guided tour with "A Tasty Side to Life". The itinerary and payments had been finalised over the net prior to our departure, so all we had to worry about on the day was to turn up at Reims railway station (after a 45 minute fast train trip from Paris) to be met by our host Sydney and driver Darren with their limo.

This is something that everyone should do at least once in their life. What an enjoyable day was ahead of us. Our hosts shared their considerable knowledge about the Champagne region, its history and its wines (made exclusively from various blends of chardonnay, pinot noir and pinot munier under Champagne

appellation law) as we enjoyed the scenery on our travels. Included in the itinerary were a farmers market in Reims and of course the impressive Reims Cathedral, but the highlights of the day apart

from the wonderful scenery were our visits to two champagne houses — one small (Le Gallais) and one large (Moët & Chandon) Le Gallais at Boursault is family owned and run with a production of less than 20,000 bottles from only four hectares. The property has an interesting history. It was once owned by Madam Clicquot and the chateau served as her summer house and hunting lodge.

cont page 8



A Visit to Scotland - Murray Fletcher

I've never been to Scotland before so the opportunity to drop in to this part of the world while on our way home from Africa was too good a chance to miss. We spent our week at Kilmichael House, a B&B at Drumnadrochit, a delightful small town right on Loch Ness. Drumnadrochit has four eating places, two of which you could call proper restaurants, one was a café which did good coffee and the other seemed to be a hippy-healthy-don't-serve-alcohol sort of place so we avoided that one. Both of the restaurants served reasonable quality meals which were probably more like up-market pub meals in style.

Fiddlers Restaurant was recommended on our first night. This turned out to have been voted Scotland's Whisky Bar of the Year for three years running as they have more than 600 single malts available for tasting – and we were only in town for a week! I enjoyed a piece of grilled Scottish salmon on a lettuce and cucumber salad with boiled potatoes while Vicki took the plunge and ordered Haggis with white sauce. Haggis is basically quite edible – like a spicy meatloaf – as long as you don't think about the ingredients. To accompany such extravagant dishes, Vicki had a Thistly Cross Premium Scottish Cider and I had a Brew Dogs Punk IPA followed by a good quality Bunnahabhane (not sure which one) followed by a Laphroaig Quarter Cask – a wonderfully peaty, smoky drink which some people find a bit overpowering. Drumnadrochit also boasts its own Loch Ness brewery which was established at the Benleiva Hotel, a genuine British pub which we also visited to sample the local ales. The Loch Ness Brewery markets their brews as Old Ness, Pale Ness, Bitter Ness, Red Ness, Dark Ness, Light Ness and so on – clever hey? We found the wine lists at both restaurants rather poor and over-priced although we did enjoy a 2009 Zenato Valpolicella Superior at the Drumnadrochit Hotel restaurant one night. As we sat in Glasgow airport waiting for our flight home and munching happily on a packet of Mackie's of Scotland Haggis and Cracked Black Pepper flavoured Potato Crisps we decided we must visit Drumnadrochit again – after all, there are still more than 590 single malts waiting for us to try at Fiddlers.



Haggis and white sauce with bread and whisky at Fiddlers, Drumnadrochit.

The Camerons in the Hunter – Wine by David, Food by Penny

The Hunter turned on a golden weekend when we visited in early August. There were two highlights: **Scarborough Wine Company** and **Muse**.

Scarborough has two locations in the Hunter, one in Hermitage Road where the winery is located and a second, which we visited, in Gillards Road. We (six of us) were shown to one of about half a dozen tables for effectively a private tasting of four white wines, a rose, three reds and a sticky. All the wines showed well but the surprise was the Pinot Noir which was a blend of three vintages made from fruit grown in the Hunter. We have come to expect top pinots to come from cool climates. We should mark Scarborough down as a possible venue for a future society visit to the Hunter.

Muse is the restaurant at Hungerford Hill. They offer a tasting menu of six courses with matched wine, either theirs or "alternate premium wines". We settled for the Hungerford wines and were impressed by the skill of the cooking and the felicity of the wine matching. This is food as alchemy, the sort of thing you need a commercial kitchen to produce, and with enough mystery ingredients (what is yuzu, anyway?) to keep the humble diner in her place. Beetroot was served with binnorie goat's cheese, coppersfolly wasabi, and buttered king brown mushrooms. Pan fried sea scallops came with cauliflower, black garlic, charcoal, lardo and borage. In my kitchen charcoal is an accident, but here it was delicately deployed on the very large, very white plate. It was matched with a Hungerford Hill (HH) 2010 HH Chardonnay from Tumbarumba.

The room is large and well heated, the staff attentive, well informed and unobtrusive, and I'd recommend it for special occasions.

Cruising and Dining - Carole and David Yeomans



We on our cruise and we attended a degustation dinner on the ship in the R2 restaurant.

A Special Selection Of
Seabourn Signature Dishes
Prepared by Chef. De Cuisine, Romuald Carreon

MENU

MALOSSAL CAVIAR, Potato shallot cake, remoulade, herb salad.

FOIE GRAS TORCHON quince confiture, roasted hazelnuts, hazelnut brioche

PUFF PASTRY BAKED PARMESAN and PROSCIUTTO CONSOME, with navy beans.
WHITE PLUM TOMATO CAPPUCINO, sun blushed tomatoes

BLOOD ORANGE and CAMPARI SORBET, with champagne topping

BROILED LOBSTER TAIL, lemon risotto, green asparagus, Newburgh sauce
CHATEAUBRIAND, roast filet of beef tenderloin, pommes neuf, asparagus ragout, truffle jus.

Both above served on the one plate.....



Deserts

SOFT CENTERED CHOCOLATE GANACHE CAKE, fresh berries and vanilla ice cream

ICE PRALINES and WARM AMERETTI

WINES SERVED

Champagne Nicols Feuillatte Brut
Chardonnay. Louis Latour Ardeche 2011
Merlot / Cabinet Sirius Bordeaux 2010

Trevor continues.....

After a short tour of the winemaking facilities, we settled down to a guided tasting of the current release wines, which were excellent, with crispness and yeasty notes, for their price point of less than 25 Euros – their top price was 40 Euros. We then spent half an hour or so walking around the vineyards to the outside of the chateau, which is under repair, and enjoying the views over the Marne valley.

After lunch at Hautsvilles (just north of Epernet), the charming resting place of Dom Perignon himself, we ventured to Moet & Chandon for a tour of the caves and a tasting. While the caves were fascinating and well worth the visit, the tour and tasting were typical of the big houses with the tourist trade in mind. The wines tasted were the standard ones that we see in Australia, with perhaps less interest for me than the wines from Le Gallais. The production levels of champagne houses such as this are mindblowing (current production for Moet & Chandon is about 26 million bottles) and the kilometers of caves seem to be endless.



The day finished with our drop off at Reims railway station for our return trip to Paris. Even if visiting the champagne houses is not your main thing, the Champagne region is worth the visit for its scenery alone. High vantage points offer wonderful views of hectares (35,000 of them – compare this to about 6000ha in the Hunter Valley) of vines that nestle in the scenic valleys and hills, with the odd chateau thrown in for good measure. This day was one of the highlights of our trip.

For those interested, the Tasty Side to Life website is: http://www.tastysidetolifetours.com/Tasty_Side_to_Life_Tours/Home.html

