



The Wine Society Dining Club

28 Stanhope Road, London N6 5NG

Telephone: 020 8348 9173 Email: assistantsecretary@wsdc.org.uk

French from start to finish

Wednesday 5th June at 7.00pm for 7.30pm

Army and Navy Club

36 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JN

Guest Speaker: Roger Cocks, Esq.

The Club AGM precedes this dinner at 6pm.

It is rare that the bible and medical sciences see eye to eye (or tooth to tooth for that matter) but here it is. Ecclesiastes 8:15 (King James edition) "Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun." [I would completely ignore Isaiah 22:13 which seems to be one of the early examples of false news.] From a quite different perspective, doctors have found that patients with heart failure who have a large, 250 ml, glass of wine every night live two years longer than teetotallers with heart failure (The Times January 5th 2019 p3 reporting the Journal of the American Medical Association, Network Open: Cardiology December 28, 2018).

I know two years is not that long in the general scheme of things but at that rate it is equivalent to an additional 243 bottles of wine which seems well worth it and a reason to keep on buying – just in case. Whether this applies to patients without heart failure looks like a good area for future research. Reading the literature, the "Dr. Doubledose effect", that is taking twice as much of an effective medication hoping for twice the beneficial effect, probably does not hold here, nor in most other examples. Never mind; but this brings us on neatly to the AGM Dinner.

We will be unashamedly in France for the wines for the AGM.

The ever-dependable **Society's Champagne** will kick start the evening for those who are attending the AGM to see them through the intricacies of the wine purchases, our accounts, the harmless drudgery of the secretary and, of course, where to go on the next Wine Tour in 2020. I can feel the excitement mounting as I put inkéd quill to parchment.

Samuel Billaud is becoming one of Chablis' finest winemakers. For over twenty years he has been responsible for some of the best wines produced in Chablis. He established his own winery in 2009 and, in 2014, his estate was greatly extended when he recovered his share of the Billaud-Simon vines after the family estate was sold to Faiveley. We are going to enjoy the **2014 Premier Cru Séchet**. This is produced from 70-year-old vines planted on Kimmeridgian limestone and passed down, in a roundabout way, from Samuel's grandmother. There is no oak here despite the hazelnut character on the nose. This should complement the smoked salmon to start.

Then three clarets with a seven-year gap between each to go with the breast of guinea fowl.

Madame Chateau de Pitray 2010 is a **Côtes de Castillon** from low down on the right bank. There is a single, 36-Ha vineyard on the clay-limestone plateau, five miles (o.k. eight kilometres – stalled Brexit) from the bell tower of St Émilion. Madame is the top red wine from the estate and is approximately two thirds merlot, one third cabernet franc and a dash of malbec.

Beau-Site is a Cru Bourgeois from St Estèphe and boasts 70% cabernet sauvignon and 30% merlot. **2003** was a very hot vintage and was blessed with soft tannins and whilst some "wine critics" dismiss this vintage as being awful and worth avoiding, most drinkers find the wines are really very good. We await your decision on this one.

Pontet-Canet comes from vineyards adjacent to Mouton Rothschild in Pauillac and is a "fifth growth". 60% cabernet sauvignon, 33% merlot, 5% cabernet franc and 2% petit verdot is the blend. The '96 was the third vintage produced by Alfred Tesseron after he had bought the estate from the Cruse family (no relation) who had owned the land for the previous 110 years. In 1999 Robert Parker was "shocked by how backward the '96 Pontet-Canet was...and a decade's worth of patience will be necessary." With due respect to Mr Parker, we have applied the Dr. Doubledose effect and given the wine two decades to soften the tannins.

Apple tart, vanilla Anglaise, apple ice-cream will be preceded by a Sauternes - **Ch Rayne Vigneau 2005**. With its vineyards next to d'Yquem and under new management in 2004 the wines have quickly moved up a gear to be truly representative of the greatest dessert wines. What better way to finish an evening?

A reminder that Matthew Jukes who is publishing his highly regarded "100 Best Australian Wines" very soon, will be leading our sit-down tasting of fourteen or more of the best of Australia at the Carlton Club on July 10th – but only fifty places.

Tony Wright,
Honorary Secretary

Dress Code

Lounge suit

Forthcoming events

10 July – Seated Tasting of Summer Wines at the Carlton Club

10 September – Burgundy Dinner at the Painters' Hall

5 November – Rhône Dinner at the Drapers' Hall

5 December – Christmas Tasting and Raffle at the Army & Navy Club

2 June 2020 – Club AGM and 70th Anniversary Dinner at the Drapers' Hall

