



The Cape Wine *Master Copy*



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In this issue...

Summer is here! Well in some South African holiday destinations, anyway! Enjoy the year-end with friends and loved ones and relax after the full, furious and fast-disappearing 2011. Recharge your batteries and enjoy old and new found favourites from our winelands.

Christine Rudman ponders on what attracts people to wine, Greg de Bruyn assists in wine architecture, Margie Barker visits London and Margaret Fry does some quirky research.

Have a safe and peaceful festive season.

Warm wine regards



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Master Speech



Christine Rudman

I don't often get to make speeches but I was asked to hand out the certificates at the recent graduation ceremony of the CWA's Diploma students in the Cape. What to say? Of course I was going to tell them how much I admired the work they'd put in to pass some difficult exams about wines of the world, plus pass a tasting exam. Most of them had fulltime jobs, many were married with families, so the hours of study for adults long past university or college days was particularly impressive. It required discipline and sacrifice, and for what? Only a few did this for career reasons, most had enrolled in this course for their own pleasure.

And when I thought about that, I realised I had the subject for my speech. Of all the different liquor categories, wine is the most seductive, it draws people in, and before they realise it, it's got them hooked. I think that's because it's so interwoven into the culture of societies, that when anyone learns about the wines of Spain or South Africa, for example, they're also learning about the geography, the customs, the food, the agriculture, the history, the personalities. That's already fascinating, all the stories, the strands holding a wine industry connected to the community, but learning about wine goes further. It gets into the detail

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Honorary Members: Colin Frith, Phyllis Hands, Dave Hughes

of the grape varieties planted, how they are converted into wine, in what ways they are blended, because many countries have distinctive styles of wine, unlike even those of their neighbours. Italy and France border each other, but their wines are totally different.

Is it any wonder, then, that people get hooked? But there's more. I believe wine is very civilising. It is designed to go with food, and when you have a bit of wine knowledge, you take the trouble to match the food and wine. That makes the meal a better experience, and it's unlikely that anyone at the table is going to behave like a slob, there's an expectation of good behaviour implicit in the wine and food matching effort that's being made. I'm in the fortunate position of being able to meet many people in our local wine industry, and it continuously surprises me just how often the conversation turns to food. Like the well-built macho winemakers who are able to speak with authority about the best match for sushi or Thai green curry, and do so with enthusiasm, not a trace of embarrassment.

The speech was well accepted, but as I write about the subject, I realize how I could be intimidating anyone who's a casual drinker, who doesn't want to get into all the detail, who prefers to keep it simple. And of course, that's another aspect of wine, it's possible to just enjoy what's in the glass without thinking about it too hard. When it comes right down to it, wine is a drink with flavours and it's possible to finish a glass and simply say, "that was delicious", without analysing it too much. Isn't that the true test of anything we consume?

But know that there's a whole complex wine world out there for anybody who's prepared to look – and that's what keeps me so involved and enthralled by wine. (This first appeared in Die Burger in September 2011)

Christine Rudman, CWM

Master Architect



Greg de Bruyn

A while ago I acted as informal mentor to Ryan Goldring, a graduate architecture student at Wits on his 5th year design project. He's a Joburg boy, with little interest in wine as a beverage or lifestyle – in fact his religious convictions forbid it – but he was

exploring the idea of a high-rise wine estate in Sandton. It was a fanciful contrivance of permeable walls and banked vineyard terraces arrayed at various levels on the northern façade. He knew how to make a building work in terms of structure, ergonomics and aesthetics, but he wanted to know how to turn the concept of "Gravity feed" production process to best advantage. He had twenty storeys of potential gravity at his disposal, after all. After a few visits to the Cape and some informal discussions with me, he had come to realise the flighty nature of this project, but he wasn't letting go, finally settling on a winery design as his thesis topic.

We explored the wine routes together, from the sublime excesses of Glenelly and Delaire to the rock-bottom basics of Topaz, and much of the in-between ground too. Ryan had seen the coffee-table publications that showcase the "StArchitect" icons, by the likes of Gehry, Calatrava and Hadid, and he shared my revulsion of the banal, unsustainable excesses they exemplify (while secretly admiring the sculptural beauty of these creations).

His project had to be embedded in the community, but the litany of failed wine industry empowerment projects of the past made that tricky. His inspired refinement of the concept was to take the facility itself into a depressed urban setting, where it could operate on many levels, rather than just as an industrial process. The chosen site was right in the middle of Cloeteville, Stellenbosch, where the legacy of alcohol abuse and the iniquities of the past were visible everywhere. He canvassed the residents, studied the demographics, modelled the terrain, contextualised the environs and generally info-crunched the theory surrounding the project until it could prove almost anything.

I may sound a little cynical, but I'm not. I want to highlight the paradox of the choice: here, where FAS and endemic alcoholism are rife and the community is at war with itself on many levels of moral degradation, it would seem the last thing they need is another source of alcoholic drink.

He makes the point quite lucidly, though, that it was the past misuse and manipulation of wine that demonised it, and not the commodity itself. In fact, because it is so familiar a part of their lives, the residents don't fear or distrust. For all its evil connotations, it can speak to them of marketing opportunities, jobs, social grace and status, in terms they're familiar with.

At a philosophical level, we architects like to believe that the way we shape the built environment can influence quality of life more profoundly than merely providing accommodation and shelter. A master's thesis needs to

demonstrate this notion innovatively, and not merely trot out the old platitudes.

Goldring chose a steeply sloped piece of wasteland between the upper and lower precincts in the township, and wrought a beautiful, if rather pretentious, gathering point. The building really does tie together the disparate fragments of the area, create meeting and activity nodes, order the circulation and highlight a new status and pride in the community. On a secondary level, it also works quite nicely as a small-scale artisanal winery.

The concept had to acknowledge that there was no obvious source of start-up capital, so the target market had to be wineries sponsoring their staff in empowerment deals, but moving them beyond a token second-label/"bywoner" indulgence. It allows for self-generated entrepreneurship too; by planning the process as a series of small, self-contained production units (micro-wineries), it encouraged growth by incremental acquisitions, partnerships and mergers.

Ryan has told me the examiners were not entirely convinced by the arguments, or indeed the means, but they accepted the hypothesis and the proof offered. In other words, he graduated, and, beguiled by his research trips to the winelands, has recently relocated and started work at the prestige Stefan Antoni practice in Cape Town.

For further information on Ryan Goldring's project, go to <http://www.behance.net/goldring/frame>

Greg de Bruyn, CWM

Innocent Master



Margie Barker

12 May dawns : my first ever overseas business trip! I'm off to the UK to represent Ken Forrester Wines at the Decanter New World Fine Wine Encounter, and the London International Wine Fair (LIWF) at the ExCel exhibition centre. A life's ambition is about to be realized!

The huge hall was a hive of activity as people struggled to set up stands, lay carpeting, hang signs, unpack wines etc. Ina, the manager of our Chenin Blanc Association, stopped off at the WOSA stand, to help set-up the two

"Chenin" pods on the stand, the one a range of "Cheap and Cheerful Chenins", and the other of "Champion Chenins", of which our Forrester's FMC was one.

Enotria are our UK agents, and we were one of a handful of their suppliers being given exposure on their stand. I had the wonderful Riojas of Marques de Riscal to my right, and a superb range of Chablis from Domaine Louis Michel on my left. I was to get to know these wines quite well over the next 3 days!

The show got off to a slow start on Tuesday, but the traffic increased as the day wore on. The tasters ranged from trade sales leads (*introduced by the very-busy-with-appointments Enotria sales team*), through the "Groupies" ("*FMC, please*" – *blinkers on* – *no other Ken Forrester wines exist*), the MW students ("*We'd like to taste SA Chenin blanc, please, it's a spot for an exam question.*" After letting them taste their way through our 4 different Chenin styles, I'd send them off to Ina at the WOSA stand, to taste the 2 Chenin ranges there.), to the quaint and characterful Father-and-son family business wine shop owners.

One highlight was the "Wines of Croatia" stand, with two very interesting examples of Plavac Mali, the deep coloured Dalmatian grape which was at one time considered a possible forefather of Zinfandel. The first was a gorgeous, plummy, spicy, New-World style, exuberant black/red wine, the second, (from a special hillside single vineyard), a deep, dark, brooding, dry, intense wine of a style so unfamiliar to me. This was not a wine for tasting, but one that needed time and coaxing to reveal its dark secrets.

Closer to home, I tasted the wonderful range of Marques de Riscal wines, and can vouch for the fact that they paired superbly with the delicious Spanish hams, olives and cheeses offered by Enotria each day. I was also very privileged to be able to taste Guillaume's 7 awesome Chablis wines, ranging from a 2010 Petit Chablis, to a 2006 Chablis Grand Cru Vaudesir. The 5 "middle" wines were from the 2008 and 2009 vintages, all from vineyards owned by the Domaine Louis Michel family, all made in the same winery, by the same winemaker. The difference in taste, said Guillaume, was the "*terroir*". And there *was* a difference in taste. When I had tasted through the wines, I said to Guillaume : "*I wish we could show just such a range of Chablis wines to our wine students in South Africa. They would never have a problem remembering Chablis again!*" "Find me an agent", he said ...

Margie Barker, CWM

Master Reseach



Margaret Fry

Economists are almost as easy to poke fun at as accountants. However, I recently came across an association of economists from around the world who are dedicated to economic research in wine related topics. It has been interesting to note the earnest compilation of data, tables and statistics to confirm some things that seem self evident (drinking before exams will reduce the marks achieved). However, there is also some very interesting work being done.

I summarise a couple of the papers here.

Anyone who has ever attended or presented a blind wine tasting is aware that the scores for wine presented blind is often different to the scores that wine achieves when tasted with the label exposed. The American Association of Wine Economists (AAWE) have confirmed this in an investigation into prices for Bordeaux wines. They found that the price we are prepared to pay for a wine depends more on objective data such as vintage, reputation and colour. Taste and smell did not contribute to the price decision. The older the wine the greater its perceived value.

More practically, the author proposes a mechanism for determining the long range price of the wine more accurately and earlier than when using wine expert opinion. Only four pieces of information are required: the vintage, the average temperature (April – September) of the vintage, the amount of rain in August and September of the vintage, and the amount of rain in the period October to March preceding the vintage. Ashenfelter (2007) is confident that this information will allow prediction of the price that the new vintage will achieve, as early as the end of the growing season. She concludes her paper by asking “why, if wine critics simply do as well as those who read the weather, there is any demand for their services”.

Anyone who has ever attended or presented a blind wine tasting is aware that the scores for wine presented blind is often different to the scores that wine achieves when tasted with the label exposed. Goldstein et al. found that the price of wines and expert recommendations of wines are not good guides for non expert wine consumers (based on a sample of 6000 US blind tastings). Generally they found that consumers who are not aware of the price of the wine seem to get less enjoyment out of expensive wines than inexpensive wines. One conclusion drawn here is that wine drinkers may simply not enjoy the same wines as wine experts.

Finally I enjoyed a working paper on the correlation between alcohol consumption and monogamy. The authors found that there was a strong correlation between the shift from polygyny* to monogamy and the growth of alcohol consumption. The main groups still practicing polygyny (Muslim and Mormon groups) ban the use of alcohol. Using historical data on preindustrial societies they determined that monogamous societies drink more alcohol than do polygynous.

They find that societies based on hunting , fishing and gathering (HFG) drink more than societies based on agriculture and animal husbandry. They also find that HFG societies are more likely to be monogamous. They suggest that this results from greater economic insecurity and lower hierarchical societal structures. They also suggest that alcohol may be used to reduce anxiety. The reason that HFG societies practice polygyny is that they are more prosperous than agricultural societies which face economically imposed monogamy. The more hierarchical the society, the greater the inequality in resources, and the greater is the propensity for polygyny.

They conclude that the correlation between alcohol consumption and monogamy results from (historical) economic development.

My question: Does this mean that the wealthier the society, we have fewer marital choices and the more we need wine to compensate?

Margaret Fry, CWM