

Whitewater Valley Wine Society

Tasting Report: June 2016

The Lane Winery, Australia

Presented by Alex Wall, Corney & Barrow

Report by Valerie Richardson

This month we welcomed Alex Wall, of Corney & Barrow, and tasted wines from The Lane winery in the Adelaide Hills region of Australia. Alex has been in the wine trade for 7 years, spending a few years at Majestic before he moved to Corney & Barrow a couple of years ago. The Lane Winery - John & Helen Edwards moved to the Adelaide Hills region of Australia in 1992 to fulfil their dream, of owning their own vineyard. For ten years John was vigneron and 'face' of the Adelaide Hills brand 'Starvedog Lane' in a joint venture with the Hardy Wine Company. In 2005, when Hardy's sold to an international beverage company, John seized the opportunity to fulfil his dream. He left Hardy's to build his own winery, cellar door and restaurant in the heart of the vineyard on Ravenswood Lane. And so The Lane winery was born. Today it's one of Australia's best mature wineries. Corney & Barrow - the first incarnation of Corney & Barrow Wine Merchants was in 1780 with the opening of Edward Bland Corney's shop in London's Old Broad Street. Despite the limited selection of Port, Sherry and Bordeaux the business flourished and in 1838 Edward's son Thomas introduced his cousin Robert Barrow to the business. The Corney & Barrow name was born. During their long history, they've made excellent relationships with winemakers around the world.

The white wines and Alex drew some lively discussions from the 44 attendees. Our opening wine, Block 2 Pinot Gris The Lane 2015 13% £12.95, with stewed apple and pear drop flavours was a good summer in the garden drink. This wine and the following wines reflected the relatively cooler production conditions of the Adelaide Hills. The first Chardonnay, Block1A Chardonnay The Lane 2015 13% £12.95, was unoaked and light and dry in style with white fruit and pear flavours, which were long and honeyed. The second oaked Chardonnay, Beginning Chardonnay The Lane 2012 13% £17.95, which had been rested on its lees, was well rounded and elegant. It had great depth of flavour with a delicious buttery, toasty, long finish. Gathering Sauvignon Semillon The Lane 2012 £17.95 was an interesting wine, being fruity but with mineral notes. The Semillon lent a honeyed richness to the orchard fruits and lemony freshness of the Sauvignon. Some members remarked on a Riesling character on the nose. This could be a keeping wine with the earlier vintages still drinking well.

The red wines were also well received. The first red, Shiraz Viognier The Lane 2013 13.5% £13.95, was ideal for those preferring a lighter red wine and for summer drinking. The Shiraz grapes and 5% Viognier grapes

were co fermented to give a rich fruity wine with light floral, pepper and liquorice notes. Block 14 Basket Press Shiraz 2012 13.5% £22.95 was much bolder after cold fermentation and 12 months in oak. It was peppery and spicy with flavours of black and forest floor fruits. The third red wine, 19th Meeting Cabernet Sauvignon The Lane 2010 14% £22.45, was a big wine with rich and plummy and black fruit flavours. It had a slight smokiness after basket pressing and oak contact but had silky, soft tannins. This was very popular, as was the last wine Reunion Shiraz The Lane 2010 14% £22.95, which had 18 months in French Oak. This wine had maintained its brilliant red colour and was ageing well. The rich fruit flavours were complex, long and integrated. This was another wine for keeping.

It was interesting to consider the wines of one winery. The unusual wine names were business like and largely denoted the names of the land zones where the grapes for that wine were produced. Something of a contrast to some of the exotic names given by some wineries! The fact that this winery operated in relatively cooler production conditions challenged us to rethink some of our expectations of Australian wine. We must thank Alex for a very enjoyable evening. He delivered a great deal of information and the maps and cuttings gave us a very good picture of the winery. He also managed to circulate round the tables and canvas opinions. This all contributed to a very lively evening with interesting discussion.