

# Whitewater Valley Wine Society

## Tasting Report: Wine Gems for 2017, February 2017

### Presented by Jim King & Keith Cooper

Report by Barbara Jones

There's no holding them back and our Society's Intrepid Duo returned this month to present their selection of wine gems for 2017. This year the wines were primarily from the New World, including Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Argentina. But they've also thrown in a French and an Italian as well (wines that is, not people) just to show we haven't forgotten those countries yet! Once again, Jim had been inundated by sample bottles from his favourite suppliers, all keen to see their bottle amongst his final pick for this tasting. Keith had chosen to feature wines which he had tasted in the last couple of months, one whilst on holiday in Australia and another at a recent London tasting.

The tasting began with the first of three white wines. Keith's first choice was a South Africa [Stellenbosch] Kleine Zalze Chenin Blanc Bush Vines 2016 [13%, £8.29]. Very pale in colour with hints of lime, this wine had a full-on zesty nose with hints of hedgerow. On the palate there were touches of lemon and lime, some minerality and a clean and fresh long finish. This was followed by a New Zealand [Central Otago] Archangel Pinot Gris, 2014 [14%, £21.99]. Again pale in colour, this wine had a more subtle fruity nose and more substantial body on the palate where there were hints of spicy pears. It was then Jim's turn and he had chosen another Stellenbosch wine – De Morgenzon Chardonnay Reserve 2015 [14%, £19.95] and the 'Best in Show' Winner with Decanter in 2016. Another pale lemon/lime coloured wine this had hints of butter and subtle oak on the nose; in the mouth it was full-bodied with flavours of toasted brioche and lemon marmalade, with a long finish. Three lovely wines but most members had their personal preference.

Jim then introduced our first red wine of the evening – Argentina [Patagonia] Aniello 006 Pinot Noir 2014 [13.5%, £12.49] produced in a newish winery in the Rio Negro area. This was typically Pinot Noir in colour, being translucent but slightly darker than some French equivalents. On the nose there were strawberries and cranberries with hints of oak, whilst on the palate there were cherries and earthy tannins. Keith then returned with an Australia [Margaret River] McHenry Hohnen 3 Amigos Shiraz Grenache Mataro Rocky Road 2012 [14.5%, £13.90]. This had good pedigree having been overseen by David Hohnen, previous owner of Cloudy Bay; it had a dark black cherry colour and was much fuller bodied than the previous wine. The Shiraz gave it dark fruit and spice that was nicely balanced by the sweetness and cherries of the Grenache. This was definitely a 'drink me now wine, with attitude' as the

entwined amigos [all female] on the label suggested! Next came Jim with his European interloper, an Italy [Veneto] Tomacco Aglianico 2013 [14%, £9.95] that was very dense in colour. Its nose was subdued but made up for by the warmth in the mouth – full on cherries, smooth tannins and superb body; only the pasta was missing! Keith followed this with a wine from his favourite Bordeaux – France Chateau Angludet 2004 [13.5%, £31.00]. This was another deep and dense coloured wine, a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot [58/35/5/2%]. Produced from vines twenty five years old this wine is now at its peak and drinking well. It had the usual earthy nose of West Bank wines with hints of cranberries on the palate providing a drier edge compared with the previous wine. Jim ended the tasting with an Australia [Heathcote] Wild Duck Creek Springflat Shiraz 2014 -15%, £44.95 but for Members £17.75!). Produced from low cropping vines with traditional wine processing methods, this wine had a dense black cherry colour. It had an intense fruity nose and smooth tannins. In the mouth it was full of plums and blackberry fruits giving it great balance. Expensive, but it will last another 20 years; that is if you could leave it alone – a wonderful end to a most enjoyable tasting!

The Society's Intrepid Duo have done it again...managing to find wines very few of us had ever heard of, let alone taste. Our grateful thanks and admiration are extended to both of them for their research and sourcing of such interesting and approachable wines; not a bad one amongst them, the wines that is!