



LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Member,

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you the death of our former chairman and Wine Club stalwart, Brian Whitaker. He died peacefully on 6th April in the Overgate Hospice where he had worked for many years. His wife, Dilys, was with him.

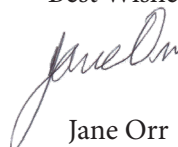
Brian served on the committee from (approximately) 1970 until forced by his health not to seek re-election at the end of 2020 – an amazing stint. We have missed his wise advice, brilliant memory and wonderful humour since he left the committee. We will raise a glass to his memory at the Annual Dinner in June.

We have also had to say goodbye to another committee member, Jo Finely, for personal reasons. She has not been on the committee for long but during her time has been keeping an eye on the website for us, which has been extremely useful. She led the brilliant Spring tour based in Dartmouth this year and we are sorry that she will not be organising any more. She is remaining a member of the Club and so we look forward to seeing her at future events.

As far as events go, there are still some spaces at the Annual Dinner but the short Autumn tour based in Lisbon is sold out.

We have outline plans for 2025, including a Spring weekend in Carlisle, a main tour in Galicia and a short tour in Sancerre. Further details of all of these should be available in time for the next newsletter, but I felt I should write this now so that those who remember Brian are informed of his passing.

Best Wishes



Jane Orr

CHWC 38TH ANNUAL DINNER, BELFAST

Monday 24th June 2024

There are still some tickets left for this year's Charles Hastings Wine Club Annual Dinner which will take place in The Ulster Reform Club. The Club is a short walk or taxi drive from the hotels and conference centre of the BMA's Annual Representative Meeting.

As usual, the dinner promises to be the gastronomic highlight of the year. The evening will start with an aperitif at 7.15pm before we sit down to a delicious four course meal in our private dining room. The Chef is renowned for his use of locally sourced seafood and meat, and we have been promised that the meal will end with some Irish cheese. Tanners are putting together an exciting selection of accompanying wines and will be discussing them on the evening.

The cost will be £105 per head, to include food and wine. Tickets are available to doctors, our wine club members and their guests. Please note there are limited places available. Tickets can be booked by emailing the Club secretary David Carter at djcarter51@gmail.com who will confirm availability and provide bank transfer details. Please specify the names of attendees and any dietary restrictions, together with an email address for an acknowledgement which will also act as your receipt to claim against your ARM expenses. Places are not guaranteed until payment is received.

SPRING WEEKEND IN DARTMOUTH

22nd - 24th March 2024

Our Spring Weekend this year was centred around the attractive and popular maritime town of Dartmouth in Devon. 24 of us stayed in the luxury Dart Marina Hotel which is situated in a fabulous waterside position on the banks of the picturesque River Dart.

The tour started on the Friday afternoon, when many of us visited Britannia Royal Naval College where we had a fascinating and most informative tour of the home of Royal Navy officer training since 1863. We were able to appreciate the rich history, architecture, role and relevance of the building and the naval training conducted there today, as well as learning the origin of the expression, "three square meals"!

On both evenings we enjoyed fabulous 3-course dinners in the River Restaurant of the Dart Marina Hotel, which afforded stunning panoramic views across the River Dart. Superbly well chosen wine pairings for both dinners were expertly introduced by Robert Boutflower, Private Sales Director of the Club's supplier, Tanners of Shrewsbury.



Saturday morning took us to the beautiful Calancombe Estate, an award winning Devon Vineyard, Winery and Distillery. After a guided walk around the vineyards and a visit to the winery we lunched on a delicious platter of English cheeses and charcuterie accompanied by a wine flight ... and gin! As well as wine from their own grapes, the Estate make Dartmouth English Gin (delicious! Many of us purchased it whilst there), cyder, cassis and apple brandy.

In the afternoon we were able to walk off some of the excesses of the morning with an informative and entertaining stroll around the historic town of Dartmouth, exploring its medieval origins, rise to prominence as a trading port and the many changes through the centuries, before enjoying another excellent dinner, with wine pairings, at the Dart Marina Hotel.

Sunday morning saw us up bright and early to catch the 'higher ferry' across the River Dart and make our way to Sandridge Barton, the new home of the award winning Sharpham Wines. The vineyard and winery has four decades of history of winemaking knowledge and experience and has the perfect climate and location for growing ripe grapes and producing a diverse range of English wines. The sun shone brightly as we sampled their delicious sparkling wine, stood amongst the picturesque vines that sloped gently down to the River Dart. We then visited Sandridge Barton's new state-of-the-art winery where, of course, we had to taste more of their great wines before we sat down, finally, to a superb Sunday lunch. What a way to end a wonderful weekend!

