



# The Cape Wine *Master Copy*



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## In this issue..

As 2009 is winding down we have had much to celebrate in the SA Wine Industry this year. Of course the CWM's were involved in many of the activities of the year. This issue carries reports on the wine legends honoured by SANWSA, Lynne Sheriff's visit to the Cape, the now famous Calitzdorp Port Festival, Pinotage planting in celebration of Cape Wine 350, Wine and food pairing in the Bredekloof, the Nederburg Auction and a reflection on Pinotage.

Have a safe and enjoyable festive season and celebrate with joy and moderation. Raise your glasses to the excitement of 2010!

*Winifred Bowman*

**EDITOR**



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## MASTER WINE LEGENDS HONOURED



L-R: Dave Hughes & Duimpie Bayly with Bennie Howard, chairman of the ICWM

Lovers of the glorified juice of the vine will agree that 350 years of wine in South Africa is a milestone that calls for a celebration. They would surely also agree that this industry has its very own legends, men and women whose contribution has influenced and shaped our wine drinking experience. The ICWM is very proud to announce that 3 of our members are included in this list of luminaries. They are Phyllis Hands, Dave Hughes and Duimpie Bayly.

The South African National Wine Show Association (SANWSA) – one of the driving forces behind the 350 Years of Wine celebrations and custodians of the annual Veritas Awards – has also taken the request from the 350 steering committee on their shoulders to pay tribute to those individuals who have played a pioneering role in the South African wine industry over the past few decades.

Twenty eight of the industry's living legends were lauded at this year's Veritas Awards, taking place at the CTICC on 10 October. The list comprises not only retired renowned wine makers and viticulturists, but also prominent industry leaders, wine writers, wine ambassadors and wine personalities.

According to SANWSA chairman, Duimpie Bayly, these industry icons have either created exquisite wines of world quality or guided the industry through their sheer passion and vision. The recipients of this honour will receive a specially designed commemorative scroll developed by the 350 Years Celebrations steering committee.

After almost two decades of providing world class judging and delivering consistently high quality results, the Veritas Awards has earned its reputation as the country's foremost competition for market ready wines. As such it is only fitting that this prestigious event pays homage to those extraordinary individuals who have made such valuable contributions to the South African wine industry.

**Members:** Chris Bargman, Margie Barker, Berenice Barker, Rolene Bauer, Francis "Duimpie" Bayly, Paul Benade, Duane Blaauw, Tom Blok, Winifred Bowman, Cathy Brewer, Marietjie Brown, Sue Brown, Marilyn Cooper, Henry Davel, Dick Davidson, Greg de Bruyn, Ginette de Fleuriot, Chris de Klerk, Heidi Rosenthal Duminy, Stephan du Toit, Pieter Esbach, Margie Fallon, Mary-Lyn Foxcroft, Margaret Fry, Vashti Galpin, Peter Grebler, Brad Gold, Penny Gold, Karen Green, Jeff Grier, Bennie Howard, Dave Johnson, Val Kartsounis, Peter Koff, Hymli Krige, Danielle le Roux, Hennie Loubser, Gerald Ludwinski, Andy Mitchell, Gerda Mouton, Alan Mullins, Boets Nel, Carel Nel, Elsie Pells, Jenny Ratcliffe-Wright, Andy Roediger, Christine Rudman, Andras Salamon, Caroline Snyman, De Bruyn Steenkamp, Eftyhia Vardas, Junel Vermeulen, Irina von Holdt, Meryl Weaver, Cathy White

**Honorary Members:** Colin Frith, Phyllis Hands, Dave Hughes

## TRADITION MEETS INNOVATION



L-R: Duimpie Bayly, Lynne Sherriff & Bennie Howard

What is enjoyed in the UK isn't necessarily a hit in the US. Trends tend to polarise and both Old and New World producers are showing welcome innovation to grab their share of the cake in an increasingly tough world wine market. So said Lynne Sherriff (CWM and MW) during the diverse and interesting ICWM Masters tasting "Tradition meets Innovation".

Similar to the tradition at Chateaux Margaux of tasting reds before whites, the first wine that was poured was a Pinot Noir from New Zealand, while the tasting ended on a high note with a stunning mystery white wine which was later revealed to be Domaine de Chavelier 1992.

With an array of wines from New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, Austria and France, Sherriff portrayed trends varying from the screwcap movement, reduced use of wood and the rediscovery of indigenous varieties to organic production and environmentally friendly packaging. Although Sherriff has been living in the UK since 1991, she advised that producers should not regard this as the only wine market – the Asian markets are showing increasing potential.

Traditional and somewhat forgotten Italian and Portuguese varieties and vineyards are being rediscovered and are starting to produce unique and characterful wines. Sherriff presented a powerful 2005 Binomio, Montepulciano d'Abruzzo (Italy) and 2006 Niepoort Charme, Douro (Portugal) as examples. She added that the tricky pronunciation of the names of some Portuguese varieties could make it hard to establish these wines in English-speaking countries. Other old stalwarts such as Sauvignon Blanc appear to be making a comeback. Producers in the Loire Valley have upped their game and have now "improved their quality immensely". "There seems to have been a figurative cross-fertilisation between New Zealand and the Loire, which has contributed to this Sauvignon Blanc revelation," adds Sherriff. Also in the Loire Valley, Cabernet Franc, has also stepped up to the new world challenge, producing fresh and appealing wine that is often not oak-matured. The most notable current focus is, however, Shiraz and other red Rhône varieties. Sherriff noted that Australia had played a great role in creating this trend with their focus on Shiraz.

With the Old World now showing some welcome innovation after having their cages rattled and the new world feeling the economic pinch after an impressive honeymoon phase – along with the communal challenge of environmental sustainability – have set the scene for some daring trends and innovative, exciting styles.

**Edo Heyns –Wynland**

### Wines Tasted:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| • 2007 Dog Point Vineyard Pinot Noir, Marlborough | 2006 Pingus Flor de Pingus, Ribera del Duero     |
| • 2006 Niepoort Charme, Douro                     | • 2000 Chateau Duhart-Milon Rothschild, Pauillac |
| • 2007 Bodegas Jimenez Landi Pielago, Toledo      | • 2007 Domäne Wachau Grüner Veltliner            |
| • 2005 Gigondas Valbelle, Saint Cosme             | Smaragd, Achleiten Wachau                        |
| • 2005 Binomio, Montepulciano d'Abruzzo           | • 2006 Bodegas Naia Naiades, Rueda               |
| • 2007 PSI, Ribera del Duero                      | • Domaine de Chavelier 1992                      |

## MASTER PORT FESTIVAL



L-R: Boets and Carel Nel

A very successful Port Festival was held from 1-3 May in Calitzdorp. CWM cousins Boets and Carel Nel were the co-chairmen for the event. This year the venue was changed to the beautiful old station grounds in Calitzdorp. The emphasis of the festival was on the quality and diversity of South African Port, the combinations of port and food, port and chocolates, as well as the lovely biodiversity (the fauna & flora of the succulent Karoo) around Calitzdorp.

The weekend kicked off with an interesting symposium, attended by most of the important role players in the port industry, on generic marketing of port and Portuguese red wines. Very good ideas emerged on how to market South African ports successfully. It also showed the need for a generic campaign by SAPP to market all styles of port, especially in the leading restaurants in South Africa.

A highlight at this year's festival was the tutored tasting of the best South African Ports compared with very good examples of Portuguese Ports in 4 different styles, namely Ruby, Tawny, LBV and Vintage/Vintage Reserve. This tasting was conducted by Dave Hughes (CWM, Panel Chairman), Cathy van Zyl (MW), Junel Vermeulen (CWM) and Colin Frith (CWM). It was concluded that the best SA Ruby Ports are of excellent quality and value, the Tawny Ports compare exceptionally well with the best that Portugal can offer, and that our Vintage & Vintage Reserve Ports are getting better with each vintage. These are showing very well against the great Vintage Ports of the Douro, especially if price was taken into consideration.

Several other activities were offered during the weekend:

- The traditional Port dance was a very good way to relive the 60's with our very own Elvis Presley (aka Chris de Klerk, CWM) and Marilyn Monroe (Junel Vermeulen).
- Lectures were held on the rare leopards of the area and the endangered Succulent Karoo.
- The South African Boule (Petanque) Championship was also contested. This year's winners were the Wineworx team from Stellenbosch under the captaincy of Andrew Baker, MD.
- Boets & Carel Nel, together with well-known chef Francois Ferreira, did a very informative port and food demonstration to illustrate the wonderful diversity and versatility of 6 different port styles with 6 different courses.
- Junel Vermeulen teamed up with Ross Wilson, chef of Narina Trogan in Braamfontein to show the possibilities of varietal wines from port grape varieties, as well as port styles, with different courses prepared by Ross.
- Junel also presented a very informative port and chocolate pairing with Belgium-trained chocolatier Marita Lamprecht.

Sunday, after a church service and an organ recital, the weekend was concluded with a Long Table Brunch under the trees at the station. This proved to be one of the most-enjoyed events at this year's festival.

The next Port Festival will take place on the first weekend of May 2011.

**Boets Nel CWM**

## **MASTERS IN THE BREEDEKLOOF**



L-R: Elsie Pels, Melody Botha, Winifred Bowman, Christine Rudman & Duimpie Bayly

It was a pretty attractive invitation. A group of Cape Wine Masters to taste the area's wines, select which ones would best match the regional food to be served at a dinner, do a wine and food tasting for the final wine selection, then attend the black tie dinner to talk about the experience and the matches.

Melody Botha, the MD of the Bredekloof Wine and Tourism had approached us because the district wanted to do its bit to also celebrate the industry's 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary, but with local flair: "350 Jaar Van Kos n Wyn". The date was set as Friday 28 August at Badsberg Cellar for the various tastings and Saturday night at Opstal Estate for the dinner. Our team consisted of Duimpie Bayly, Elsie Pels, Winnie Bowman and me.

The organisation at Badsberg was faultless. All the region's producers participated but each one could only send in 4 wines. Even so, our line-up for the initial tasting was 61 wines (some sent in less, which is why we had an odd number). Armed with a list of the dishes and their composition, we tasted through 9 flights of white, rosé, red, sweet and fortified wines. The tasting was blind, the only information we had was the variety or wine style, but each flight of glasses was left in front of us so we could retaste till our choice was made.

There was remarkable consensus between us when we revealed our shortlists and after some discussion, we agreed on 22 wines. The next stage had the selection tasted blind with the food dishes. Some of the choices were surprising, but that was the fun part of the experience. After the tasting, the final selection was revealed to us by Melody, but we were sworn to secrecy: the producers would only know at the dinner. The dinner guests were going to have an opportunity to try at least two wines per course, for their own matching experience.

With each course, one of the four of us spoke about the match and why those particular wines worked best. It was a splendid evening, very well organised and attended, with delicious food and wine.

Final comments on the matching? The surprises were that Cabernet wasn't as good a food match as we expected (only 1 of the 8 made the final cut: good wines, but the tannins interfered with food flavours), nor was Viognier (none selected), but no surprise - versatile Sauvignon Blanc can handle quite complex flavours.

**Christine Rudman CWM**

### **Menu and Wine Pairing**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| MCC on arrival                                    | Deetlefs Familie MCC 2006<br>Du Preez Estate's Hendrik Lodewyk MCC   |
| Butternut Soup with citrus                        | Botha Chenin Blanc 2009<br>Merwida Chardonnay 2009<br>Avondrood Blush Rosé 2009  |
| Smoked Snoek Timbale,<br>with Avocado & Camembert | Botha Sauvignon Blanc 2009<br>Du Toitskloof Sauvignon Blanc 2009   |
| Salad with Pear & Blue Cheese                     | Bergsig Sauvignon Blanc 2009<br>Deetlefs Weisser Riesling 2008   |
| Fillet Steak                                      | Bergsig Cabernet Sauvignon 2007<br>Waboomsriver Shiraz 2008<br>Seven Oaks 6 + 1 Cab Sav/ Shiraz 2005<br>Deetlefs Oak Matured Pinotage 2008 |
| Brownie, served with cream                        | Badsberg Noble Late Harvest 2005<br>Daschbosch Nectar de Provision   |
| Coffee  | Botha Vintage Port 2004<br>Badsberg Rooi Muscadelle 2008   |

## **MASTER PINOTAGE PLANTING**

Meerendal Wine Estate in the Durbanville Wine Valley celebrated the 350 years of South African wine by planting a historic vineyard in September this year.

It is 350 years since Jan van Riebeeck made the first wine at the Cape on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1659. Meerendal was founded in 1702 and was one of the first wine farms in the Tygerberg that would become Durbanville later. Meerendal was also one of the first 14 farms to be granted Wine Estate status in 1973 when the Wine of Origin Legislation was introduced.

A special site with virgin soil was selected for this new vineyard. It lies next to the Pinotage Heritage Block vineyard and the soil has a soft, loamy texture with some clay. Three hundred and fifty vines have been planted to pay homage to the 350 years of SA Wine.

The vines that have been planted have a unique origin. Meerendal was one of the first farms to plant Pinotage in the early 1950's. One vineyard that was planted in 1955 has remained intact and these bush vines produce the grapes for the single vineyard wine called the Heritage Block Pinotage. It was decided to use this vineyard as the source of material for the 350 vineyard as the vines came from the original stock of Prof Perold, the father of Pinotage that was supplied to the wine farmers then. In this way Meerendal is continuing the historic link with the origin of Pinotage and ensuring that the original planting material here is preserved for the future.

In June 2008 cuttings from these bush vines were taken to Cape Vines Nursery that grafted them on to Paulsen root stock, ready for planting this year.

The guests that attended included representatives of the famous Pinotage farms of the 1950's – Bellevue, Kanonkop and Uiterwyk – wine writers, Cape Wine Masters, the Pinotage Association, other industry leaders, all the winemakers of the Durbanville Wine Valley, the present owners and staff of Meerendal, children of the Starke family that previously owned Meerendal for 75 years and invited guests.

The guests could select their vines from the table that was set up in the new vineyard and proceed to the holes that were prepared. After the planting ceremony each guest signed a special scroll that will be displayed in the tasting room at Meerendal. The first wine will be made in 2012 and the few barrels made from the 350 vines will be kept separately and bottled as a reserve wine.

Meerendal is proud to continue its commitment to the South African wine industry through this project and to the rich heritage of Pinotage that this estate has since the first release of a bottled Meerendal Pinotage in 1969.

**Bennie Howard CWM, Chairman ICWM**



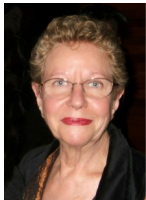
Dave Hughes adjusting the new Pinotage vine



Duimpie Bayly receiving assistance with planting the new vine



## MASTER REFLECTIONS ON PINOTAGE



Christine Rudman

If you think about Pinotage, the name Beyers Truter will pop up at some stage, one of the champions of the variety and certainly a big quality influence in its modern revival and acceptance. It is fitting therefore that I should use two quotes connected to him in some way. The first is on a Beyerskloof tee-shirt: *Pinotage is nie my baas, maar as hy praat dan luister ek*. The second stands inscribed over the door at Kanonkop: *Pinotage is the juice extracted from women's tongues and lion's hearts. After having a sufficient quantity, one can talk forever and fight the devil*.

This sets the scene very nicely for any Pinotage discussion, because it inspires passion of one sort or another in most people – love it or hate it, but seldom indifference.

Exactly 50 years ago, Pinotage burst onto the wine scene, winning the General Smuts Trophy as the champion wine at the Cape Wine Show. It came from Bellevue, one of only a handful of properties that had planted it since Professor Perold did the Pinot Noir and Cinsaut crossing in 1924 that gave birth to the new variety. It reached stores in 1961 as Lanzerac Pinotage, for a long time the only Pinotage available. As with anything new, the variety's acceptance was slow and nearly dealt a death blow by the disparaging remarks made by the visiting British Masters of Wine in 1977. Plantings declined and reached a low point of 1.9% of the country's vineyards in 1990. Fortunately there has been a recovery since. In the past 50 years Pinotage has shown that it is capable of competing in the international arena against fine wines. It is not just one or two names that crop up on the award list, although Kanonkop has time and again proved its expertise with the variety. Visiting foreign journalists no longer find it fashionable to just write negative reviews, and even often mention some wines that particularly impressed them. What has contributed to this change? I believe the variety has come of age. The more I talk to winemakers, the more I hear that Pinotage requires different cellar handling to other varieties and it is now common knowledge amongst producers that there has to be careful restriction of the cropping levels if the aim is to get the best quality grapes. More than most other varieties, there is a tight focus on every aspect of viticulture and winemaking, thanks in part to the Pinotage Association's workshops, but also because of the passion of a group of people, not just winemakers, who tirelessly share their knowledge and passion at every opportunity. UK based consumer Peter May is one of them: besides a website, he has written a book about the variety. Pinotage is very versatile, producing brightly coloured and fruity Rosé, unwooded and fleshy everyday quaffers, medium-priced lightly wooded wines, and it adds fruitiness and a juicy roundness to any blend. That early wild tone has since been controlled through better understanding of cellar handling. Although it is no longer restricted to just our shores, there are plantings in New Zealand amongst other countries, we have the advantage of 50 years of history and experience. Making our name with Pinotage would give us a great marketing opportunity in the export arena. After the first 50 years of Pinotage's winemaking history, taking into account what has been achieved, its future looks attractive and secure.

**Christine Rudman CWM**

## MASTER GOES FULL CIRCLE



Irina von Holdt

It was something of a dream to attend the Nederburg Auction back in the Eighties. The only ways were either to be Chris Barnard or a "bottle store" owner! Even Tony Mossop, one of the first three CWMs to graduate, had to wangle a job to taste all the Nederburg wines that were served at lunch, to check for cork taint. The lure for me, sitting on the sidelines, was not the fashion show or the fancy lunch, but to taste those beautiful, rare and well-aged wines.

Then suddenly it all changed – as new CWMs together with Penny Gold, Lynne Sherriff and Michael Claassens, I was invited. Oh! the thrill, the excitement! Phil Hands, then principal of the Cape Wine Academy, took us greenhorns under her wing and showed us the ropes. Where the action was, how to get a good seat and who was who. And the all important tasting — it started at 8h00 and finished at 9h00! That meant getting up at 6 for a quick breakfast (can't taste on an empty stomach), make-up, smart dressing with high heels and a hat, *nogal*. Then it was the long drive to Nederburg. Coming late meant missing precious tasting time, a big mistake. I wallowed in some of the most exquisite wine: historic reds, glorious old wines and a superb collection of older Nederburgs which took me back to the days when my dad bought the Selected Cabernets.

The next year it was back to wondering whether we'd crack the invite, but Stellenbosch Farmers Winery had us in their sights and on their books, so to speak, and we CWMs needn't have worried. Then as a wine writer, with some five columns on the go, the invite was always there, together with pre-auction media tastings held months before the day and suddenly I found that I was an old hand, even blasé, and able to compare previous auctions.

Time flies and in '95 my daughter and I started to produce high quality chenin blanc, a venture considered by many to be bizarre. We stuck to it and in '02 even submitted a wine to the Nederburg Auction selection instead we sported red producer badges. It was a steep learning curve – not all of the wine sold. But we learned our lesson and from the next year (selected again!) everything sold. There was another nice surprise en route, though. Producers who had a wine on the auction are invited to taste on the selection panel for the following year's auction. This meant tasting the entire range of wines submitted. Not at 8 in the morning, and no hats. What a joy! For years I regarded it as the top tasting of SA wine and in many ways it remains so – a snapshot of the past and present. It is fascinating to see how styles change, winemaking changes and, most important of all, how our perceptions change.

This year it was with some pride that our small cellar, Old Vines Wine Cellars, had not one but three wines selected. I was at my stand at 8 — high heels, no hat. That's passé, by the way, it went the way of premier grand cru. There were a couple of nice little bidding wars for our wines which warmed my heart and, looking around the room, I felt I had truly come full circle.

**Irina von Holdt CWM**