Welcome to the ICWM ‘Mastercopy’ Newsletter

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- We welcome three newly qualified Cape Wine Masters
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- We see how Debi van Flymen CWM is embarking on new wine ventures in Johannesburg
- Catherine Dillon CWM describes her trip to the Finger Lakes and New York wine regions

The ICWM announces its 2016 'Wine Personality of the Year' recipient

Charl Theron obtained an M.Sc.Agric degree in Oenology at Stellenbosch University before embarking on a 45 year career in the wine industry. He has lectured at the University for many years and helped establish the US Wine Evaluation Course.

After 30 years at KWV he retired as Production Director and was appointed as Chairperson of the Department of Viticulture and Oenology at the University of Stellenbosch. Charl has established an accredited training course for cellar workers. He is a member of the SA Brandy Foundation and the Wine & Spirits Board and has held positions with Winetech, the SA Society for Oenology and Viticulture, and the SA National Wine Show Association as well as writing for Wineland Magazine. Charl is a seasoned wine judge and includes the panels of the Wine and Spirits Board, Young Wine Show, Veritas, Top 10 Pinotage, SA Terroir Wine Awards, Muscadel Association, Diners Club and overseas competitions in Spain, Portugal, Slovenia, Argentina and New York.

Charl’s contribution to the wine industry has already been acknowledged by the Paarl Wine Association, the SA Society for Oenology and Viticulture, the SA National Wine Association, and the US Viticulture and Oenology Old Students Association. Charl is currently consulting oenologist at Avontuur Winery, and the ICWM is pleased to name Charl their ‘Wine Personality’ of 2016.

New Cape Wine Masters
From left to right: Jacques Steyn, Karin Visser and Janno Briers-Louw

**Janno Briers-Louw:**

Janno grew up with wine on the table, mostly Chenin Blanc, from the local Co-op, Perdeberg. He remembers being able to smell the distinct guava flavours of this wine at a young age. He Matriculated in 2002 from Paarl Boys’ High and in 2007 completed a B. Agric degree with Viticulture and Cellar Management as majors from the University of Stellenbosch (Elsenburg).

His first encounter with formal wine tasting was in 2003, with the Cape Wine Academy. After his first lecture a friend asked him whether he would like to study all the way to become a Cape Wine Master. Janno’s answer was “never in a thousand years”…

In 2010, he completed the Cape Wine Academy Diploma. He remembers the Diploma graduation where Benny Howard CWM said “Let’s see who goes on to become Cape Wine Masters”. Being influenced by these challenging words, he enrolled with the Institute of Cape Wine Masters six months later.

Janno was fortunate to become part of a special tasting group that met weekly. Everyone brought a concealed wine chosen according to the theme of the week. Even though the tastings were serious, they were great fun, especially when the theme was Brandies! More than half a dozen of this group went on to become Cape Wine Masters.

As a Cape Wine Master, Janno hopes to be an ambassador for wine and in particular wines from dryland vineyards, which was the topic of his thesis. When he is not making, tasting, or selling wine, he relaxes by spending time with his wife and son and their pets, or by mountain biking, or shooting firearms (he competed in two World Championships for Clay Target Shooting).
Since 2008, he has been managing the sheep and cattle on the family farm, ‘Eenzaamheid’, in Agter-Paarl, whilst heading up his own wine brand as well. Some friends have even joked by calling him “a sheep farmer with a wine problem”.

**Jacques Steyn:**

'It was the move to Cape Town in 2006 to study the culinary arts where my passion for wine was realised. The two themes are intrinsically linked. I did all the necessary courses and passed all the requirements to enrol in the Cape Wine Master programme. Every student of the programme always has one subject they wrestle with and mine was viniculture, the one I actually enjoyed studying the most. I also often found myself stopping in the middle of a tasting exam thinking that I would actually like to finish the tasting portion!

My philosophical inquiry led me to attend a Nicholas Joly seminar which cemented the ideas regarding my thesis topics. One of the primary aims of the thesis was to breakdown my own prejudices regarding biodynamics and represent it in a fresh, creative way.

I am currently applying all my energy into establishing my career in the global wine industry through Jordan Wine Estate.

**Karin Visser:**

‘Thinking back, registering for Cape Wine Masters in May 2011 took a bit of encouragement from fellow CWM friend, Martin Gomez. I really enjoy the process of learning, and having enjoyed the Diploma so much, taking the plunge to enroll for the Cape Wine Masters was a natural progression. Becoming a partner in ‘French Toast’ Wine and Tapas Bar, I had the opportunity to taste wines regularly. The names of the wines were written on a piece of paper placed upside down, underneath the glasses. Needless to say, they often tried to trick me with the odd whiskey glass amongst the brandies. I recall my friend and business partner, John, bought me the first ‘practice’ bottle of brandy which was a Portuguese Maciera. It was so bad that we certainly could not afford to place it amongst our other spirits in the bar. Martin and I had many tastings with Winnie Bowman CWM, often on Sunday afternoons. These sessions proved to be invaluable and we had lots of fun. Lizette Tolken CWM was taskmaster when it came to brandy drilling and no prisoners were taken! We tasted regularly on Monday evenings at Flagstone Winery in Somerset West, and I remember thinking to myself driving back on the N2, that this better be worth it. It was questioned at times.

This qualification is but just the beginning of my relatively short career in wine. It is a stepping stone to delve deeper into certain wine regions of the world. Being South African my interest is certainly in South African wines. I am excited about Pinot Noir from the Hemel-en-Aarde. This region also formed part of my dissertation, comparing it to Central Otago in New Zealand. Currently, I am working for a fine wine importing company which imports wines from France, Spain and Italy. It is stimulating working with wines at the top end of their respective wine regions. To be able to talk about it and sharing the passion with
other wine lovers is very rewarding’.

The current membership profile of the CWM is 52% (50) male and 48% (46) female. Western Cape members comprise 56% of the total contingent, and Gauteng 29%, while other provinces – KwaZulu-Natal and Free State comprise 3% and overseas members 12%.

Mary-Lou Nash CWM reports on her eventful 2016 harvest

The 2016 harvest at Black Pearl Wines near Paarl was character building. Rainfall managed 260 mm for the whole of 2015, which categorized us as semi-desert. My dryland vineyard is crying for rain today. Usually my grapes look like blueberries, this year they looked like blackcurrants! Not a problem for quality, but a big problem for quantity. Luckily my neighbours were willing to part with some of their crop to keep me afloat.

The next hurdle was discovering all my copper pipes on my cooling unit had been stolen the weekend before starting harvest. It seems caging in your cooling unit is
meaningless when thieves carry ample tools to cut right through it. And of course the
insurance company who made you cage it in in the first place then refuse to cover
the hefty bill to repair. It amazes me how R300 for a few pipes stolen can cost you
R30 000 to repair and replace! Luckily my cool room system wasn’t vandalized, so I
could get my grapes into the cellar ice cold, making fermentation manageable.

They say bad things come in 3’s. Second week of harvest and all going smoothly
until I get a call from ADT Thursday night that my cellar alarm is going off.
Reluctantly I get out of bed, jump in the bakkie and cruise down to the cellar. On
arrival all is quiet and as I am cursing ADT, I see my Dad’s Landie speeding up to my
house. In this case a Landrover and speed do go together! I meet him and his wife
half way up the drive to find out it was actually their house alarm that was activated.
They had been nabbed by three guys while letting the dogs out for the night, and had
spent the next hour tied up while their house was ransacked. Dad’s 78 year old
hands were nimble enough to finally free himself and press a panic button. The
trauma continued into the next day when Dad ended up in hospital with a heart
attack. Luckily I didn’t lose Dad, but I lost my assistant winemaker for the rest of
harvest.

With all the excitement and drama in the past, I am hoping good things must also
come in 3’s. So this year I can’t wait for my 5 star Platter rating, 95 Parker points,
and my daughter winning the South African Pentathlon Championships!

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**Mentoring a Cape Wine Master student, by Marilyn Cooper CWM**

No one can describe the pride that one experiences when one attends the industry
lunch and becomes a Cape Wine Master. After four or five years of continuous
studying and rigorous tasting practices, it suddenly seems over.

That is why it is so rewarding to be appointed a mentor to a Cape Wine Master
candidate. Having passed the Diploma examinations with over 60%, a student can
apply to become a CWM student.

To guide the students through the examinations and see that person receive their
qualification is almost as rewarding as receiving it yourself.

The requirements are four tasting examinations: natural wines, sweet and fortified
wines, brandy and sparkling wines, all from around the world; there are also four
written theory examinations: viticulture, viniculture, general knowledge and brandy
(fortified wines). Once five of the exams have been successfully completed, a
seminar topic can be submitted. This should be beneficial to the South African wine
industry. One glance at the list of topics submitted and completed on either the
Cape Wine Academy or Cape Wine Master websites shows the standard achieved
to date. Some of them are:

• **Sparkling wine – the growth of this category of wine in South Africa** (Sarah Newton 2010)

• The cost breakeven point of wine (Tom Blok 2007)

• **Wood alternatives – a substitute for barrels or merely an economical flavourant** (Andrew Mitchell 2007)

• **Techniques to achieve moderate alcohol levels in South African wine** (Andras Salamon 2007)

In the first year, candidates are required to sit each of the tasting examinations plus one written exam. Fortunately many of the existing CWMs are more than willing to assist in hosting various tasting sessions during the year and particularly the weekend prior to the exams, so the burden is not solely on the mentor. Many mentors and mentees are in fact not in the same city/town – CWM’s Chris de Klerk and Junel Vermeulen were based in Johannesburg while their respective mentees Francois Bezuidenhout and Yvonne le Riche were based in Stellenbosch. Both became CWMs.

Says Chris, “It really is important to become a mentor, creating a bridge from Diploma level, filling the gap and becoming a guide to the level that is expected”.

Winifred Bowman was mentor to a student who originally lived in Cape Town but moved first to England and then Singapore, also successfully returning to receive his qualification.

While being a mentor is not paid, the rewards are tremendous. There are currently 30 CWM students in the system, and the assigned mentors not only meet new dynamic wine enthusiasts, many from the industry, but also update their knowledge at the same time.

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**Get to know your Cape Wine Master - Duane Blaauw**

Duane completed the Cape Wine Masters program in 2009. He first realized that there might be more to drinking wine in the early 1990s, from an informal wine tasting group among junior doctors working in the Eastern Cape hospital where he did his internship and early medical practice. On returning to Johannesburg to
specialize, he was able to take this interest further through the courses of the Cape Wine Academy. He started with the Preliminary course in 1997 and, once his academic interest had been piqued, he completed the Certificate, Wines of the World, and Diploma courses, before eventually tackling the challenge of the CWM.

Duane doesn’t work in the wine industry but wine does take up a large proportion of his free time. He is a member of the Wild Yeasts tasting group in Johannesburg which includes 8 CWMs. Wild Yeasts has been meeting every month for over 10 years now, tasting mostly international wines. He also attends other regular tasting groups and other public and industry wine tastings held in Johannesburg. He has lectured, revised course materials, and examined for the Cape Wine Academy and is also interested in the science and statistics of wine evaluation and consumer wine choices.

Duane is a medical doctor and public health specialist with additional qualifications in public management, tropical medicine, occupational health, medical science and statistics. He works as a senior researcher and lecturer in health systems and health policy research at the Centre for Health Policy (CHP) at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and lives with his lifelong partner, Eftyhia Vardas, another CWM, in Parkhurst, Johannesburg. His personal interests, other than wine, include golf, travelling to other wine regions around the world, and attending international wine shows, cooking, reading and contemporary classical music. His favourite international wine region at the moment is probably Piemonte - for the wide range of wines available, the high quality Nebbiolos, the amazing scenery, and the excellent restaurants. He has experienced many great moments in the world of wine but, if forced to choose one, it would have to be attending a masterclass tasting of Chateau Lafite wines in London in 2011.

Duane likes and tastes all styles of wines, but he is especially partial to Riesling (his CWM tasting seminar was on new world Rieslings), Semillon, Cabernet Franc and Nebbiolo and seeks out varietals such as Assyrtiko, Grüner Veltliner, Sagrantino and Mencia when he travels.

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**Debi van Flymen CWM branches out**

At the end of January, after five years as the General Manager of Wine Cellar in Gauteng, Cape Wine Master Debi van Flymen left to begin two new business ventures.
Debi has put together a portfolio of some of South Africa’s most sought after producers under the banner of DvF Wine Distributors (Pty) Ltd. based in Gauteng. She also services customers in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the North West province. The distribution focus is “definitely on smaller wineries who really take time to nurture their production and in turn, keep a keen eye on the quality of what they produce”, says van Flymen. This collective has a sustainable, ethical approach to production with some employing organic and biodynamic principles. She continues: “Each winemaker in the portfolio has an understanding of, and connectivity to, their vineyards and also share a passion for the vine. Her second venture is a wine events company called GrapeSlave (Pty) Ltd. The calendar has been full and Debi has a small tasting room in Dunkeld that accommodates 18 to 20 people. Events aren’t tied to this location though – pop ups have already been held in Pretoria and Johannesburg. She is trying to create new, exciting experiences for wine enthusiasts. A recent event was a "speed-dating with winemakers evening" that followed DvF Wine Distributors' inaugural trade show.

There are plenty of events, small and large, to feature soon, including a monthly “Not the Bookclub, Bookclub” which reads strictly wine labels, a large regional event mid-year and dinners with winemakers on rooftops and in special locations across
Gauteng. A self-drive wine safari is also being planned to a lodge near the Kruger Park.

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**A visit to Finger Lakes and Long Island in New York State, by Catherine Dillon CWM**

My latest trip to the USA was spent on the East coast to explore the AVA’s of Finger Lakes and North Fork, Long Island with family in Connecticut and New York. The first leg of our wine road trip was from Connecticut to the Finger Lakes region. It comprises of eleven lakes. To the north lies Canada, Lake Ontario and the impressive Niagara Falls - our end destination. The drive from Connecticut took us north-west via Ithaca and Montour Falls to Hermann J Wiemar winery located on the West side of Lake Seneca.

Hermann J Wiemar, a German by birth, is credited with planting the first varieties of Riesling and Chardonnay in this area in 1976 and the original vineyard (HJW vineyard) remains today. The gravel soils and cool climate of the surrounding area reminded Wiemar of his family’s vineyards in the Mosel, Germany. We did not make any appointments for the two wine journeys, preferring to experience the tasting room as is. Fortunately, we were offered a tasting with Dillon Buckley, assistant winemaker to Fred Merwarth, who took over winery duties from Hermann in 2003.

We did a tasting of all their wines, but the Rieslings proved the favourites, in particular the Reserve Dry Riesling 2013 and the Riesling HJW 2013. Balanced acidity and minerality were stand-out features of these wines. The dessert wines included TBA and BA styles with alcohol levels of 7,1% and dollops of lychee, honey and citrus. The reds tasted included award winning Pinot Noir and Cabernet Franc, with the latter delivering more than expected.

With Lake Keuka calling we headed southwest to the delightful town of Hammondsport in time to enjoy a seafood dinner. The wine list naturally offered local wines and since we were to visit Dr Konstantin Frank the next day, we selected their Dry Riesling. It complimented the seafood dishes well and in particular the clam and linguine dish. The visit to Dr Konstantin Frank was a highlight for several reasons, most notably meeting Meaghan Frank, great granddaughter of the
legendary Dr Frank. Dr Frank was the first person to plant Vitis Vinifera vines in the Finger Lakes region in 1958, several years before Hermann J Wiemar.

Meaghan holds an MBA and is passionate about her family, wine and marketing – no surprise that she is set to take over the family business from her father Fred in the near future. Meaghan was most impressed to learn that the Cape Wine Academy includes a module on USA wines and that students get to learn about the pioneer work of Dr Frank. The winery is located above Lake Keuka with vineyards alongside and down towards the lake.

Riesling does exceptionally well here and the selection of Rieslings we tasted included Dry, Semi-Dry, Reserve Riesling, Late Harvest and Botrytised styles. We moved on to tasting their Gewürztraminer, Grüner Veltliner, Pinot Gris and Rkatsiteli wines followed by the reds - Pinot Noir, Lemberger, Cabernet Franc and Merlot.

With a couple of boxes stored in the boot of the car, we headed for lunch at Bully Hill Vineyards before arriving back in Hammondsport to enjoy the afternoon kayaking on Lake Keuka.

The second leg of the trip was to Long Island en-route back from Washington DC, via Manhattan and the Long Island Expressway. We focused on the North Fork so as to reach Connecticut via the Sound Ferry, thus avoiding a round trip.

The Long Island Expressway ends at River Head, where it forks North and South. The scenery transforms at this point, giving way to farm stalls selling a variety of vegetables, herbs, plants and jams. Potatoes seem to do well here too! The local wine industry is populated with financial guru’s, doctors and retired business folk – pioneers of a different sort, choosing the lifestyle and not the terroir since the Atlantic certainly lives up to its reputation – cold and icy winds.

Our first stop was at Paumanok Vineyards (the native American name for Long Island, meaning “the island that pays tribute”), owned by Ursula and Charles Massoud. Ursula was in the tasting room and immediately recognized my South African accent. She proudly informed me that her son Kareem had completed a vintage in Stellenbosch a few years back. We did a full tasting of their wines, ranging from bubbly to Cabernet Franc, with their Sauvignon Blanc and Chenin Blanc proving to be favourites with the cousins.
The next winery stop was at The Lenz Winery to explore their Chardonnay and Merlot offerings. The eclectic winemaker Eric Fry appeared and invited us to join him in the cellar before taking us through his range of wines. A micro-biologist by profession, Eric started making wine “by accident”. Since 1996, Lenz have organized tastings with the aim of comparing the Lenz wines to internationally acclaimed wines, including Chateau Petrus!

Our last winery visit before catching the ferry was to Macari Vineyards located in Mattituck. Once again my South African accent was warmly welcomed and Joe Macari Jr was quick to inform me that a Wilhelm from Stellenbosch had recently completed a vintage. Macari offer a wide range of wines that include Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Riesling, Merlot and their flagship Cabernet Franc Reserve.

I am so glad to have visited two wine regions that I have studied and to have tasted first hand wines that are indeed shaped by terroir. Whilst they may not have represented the best in the world, there were indeed outstanding examples and I look forward to opening the remaining bottles in my collection as and when the mood takes.

**Bits & Pieces**
The ICWM is pleased to announce that both Bennie Howard CWM (left) and Alan Mullins CWM (front) were recently inducted as members of the Commanderie de Bordeaux en Afrique du Sud. Here they are pictured with fellow Commandeurs Winnie Bowman CWM, Duimpie Bayly CWM and Raymond Noppé CWM.

Malbec Day celebrated by Kristina Beuthner CWM (2nd from left) at the Argentinian Embassy in April
CWM’s Sandy Harper (far left) and Debi van Flymen (far right) celebrating ‘Women in Wine’
Outgoing ICWM Chairperson Winnie Bowman CWM at a children’s charity function with the Mayor of Camden in London

CWM Carel Nel and wife Jeanne receiving accolades at the SA Top 100 Wine Awards
The ICWM’s Annual Spring Tasting will take place on Thursday 1\textsuperscript{st} September 2016, further details will be announced soon. Booking information will be posted on the Institute’s website and other events listings.

At the recent AGM, the following office bearers were elected to the Executive Committee of the ICWM for the 2016 - 2017 period:

Chairperson: Conrad Louw CWM (new)
Vice Chairperson: Ginette de Fleuriot CWM (new)
Secretary: Debi van Flymen CWM (re-elected)
Treasurer: Tom Blok CWM (re-elected)
Northern Branch Chairperson: Derek Ramsden CWM (re-elected)
Southern Branch Chairperson: Nina-Mari Bruwer CWM (new)
Communications Officer (new position): Raymond Noppé CWM (new)

Please remember to send me any news about your travels, wine judging or other wine-related activities you are involved in.

Until next time!
Regards
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