



SWAS 'Bin Ends'

Secretary's Report 2020

- 2019 was not a particularly good year for SWAS but I don't believe that any of us could have foreseen just what 2020 would bring...!
- We lost our dear friend and SWAS stalwart Janis Geddes very sadly right at the end of 2019. Jan is much missed by us all, not least by me, for her friendship, help and support as my 'right hand man' whilst keeping me and the SWAS finances on the straight and narrow for the last few years. On behalf of SWAS members I made a token donation from SWAS funds to her favoured charity, Médecin Sans Frontières (MSF), in her memory.
- Jill and Bryan were able to hold the much anticipated first SWAS Tasting of our 2020 Calendar on 7th of March. They admirably reduced the wine stocks in our 'Cellar' during the evening and hosted a splendid Tasting.
- Little did we all expect what would happen then.
- The first lock-down kicked in just past the middle of March.
- Our April, May, June and July Tastings all had to be cancelled or postponed. A brief respite window opened in September and Bill very kindly jumped in and hosted a superb 'al fresco' Spanish Picnic in his back garden on 5th September. The weather was kind and Bill not only hosted and provided all the excellent wines but personally cooked and served all the food. There is no end to his talents...
- Bill & Billy came to our rescue in April when they proposed trying out a 'Virtual SWAS Tasting' over the internet using the free 'Zoom' conferencing software. The first virtual session happened on Sunday 12th April and really was a resounding success. A few weeks later another session was enjoyed and since then, we have 'met' on-line almost every Sunday at 7.00pm.
- Our 30th 'Virtual Tasting' was held last Sunday. We regularly get up to 16 Members joining in, that is as many as a busy 'normal' SWAS Tasting has achieved over the last few years.
- I really must express my sincere thanks to Bill & Billy for not only for coming up with the idea but especially to Bill for 'hosting' each session and keeping us all in order. Thank you also to those Members who regularly join in. Thank you, Bill...! Your accordion and occasional fancy dress are forgiven.
- Hopefully, maybe even as early as next Spring, we will be able to resume our monthly get togethers in the homes of our Members to enjoy good wine, good food and good company as SWAS Members have been able to do for well over 40 years.
- No Christmas Quiz tonight, sadly, it will be carried over to the first 'normal' Tasting that we are able to hold next year. We are not going to let Peter Holmes off that easily...
- Don't forget to sign up pay your 'subs' for 2021 so that we can keep track of all our Members and keep our website going...!
- On a personal note, I have been your Secretary for the last five or six years and a Member for ten. Circumstances are now such that Claire and I will find it difficult in the future to travel down to deepest Sussex as often as we have over the past 10 years.

- I will therefore be hanging up my corkscrew and retiring from the post of SWAS Secretary with immediate effect. I fully intend to remain a member of SWAS and I will be very happy to continue to look after our website, should that be our members' wishes, for as long as I am able. Our next Secretary will have my full support for as long as he/she would want.
- Thank you all for your continued support, have a great Christmas and let's hope that 2021 yields some return to normality.

Mike