

# West Leicestershire u3a

## Wine Appreciation Group meeting 25 Feb 2026

This week would have been Kenneth William's 100th birthday (actually on 22nd) which prompted much discussion about 'they don't make them like that anymore' TV and radio programmes. Tony Hancock, Kenneth Horne et al were among those referenced. Perhaps disturbingly many of our number could remember the characters, catch phrases and accents with accompanying renditions.

Roger then went on to warn about a scam purporting to be from the AA, no, not that AA, the car one. The advertised 'escape tools' obviously don't exist but are available at a significant discount. His recommendation was to carry a brick and a sharp pair of scissors in your car at all times. Neither of which are optimal if unsecured during a crash. Just drive safely!

A straw poll was conducted which indicated one end of the meeting table all really like Marmite. We did not ask the other end of the table in case they wanted to share the Cheese and Marmite Puffs being enjoyed by us. In addition to the usual comedy cheese, crisps, sausage rolls and Pringles we had a very special addition to our nibbles list - Jelly Babies, who remembered how nice they were? Nick informed us they are the preferred stimulant while competing in Half Marathons due to the sugar-coating preventing agglomeration. Obviously naff all use for full Marathons during which they will eventually stick together, allegedly.

Our wine subject was 'Antipodean Wines'. It was suggested Tasmanian wines would make a suitable subject but an internet search showed the cost to be prohibitive - something to do with travel distance as we were told they do produce some fine vintages. Speaking of travel we are struggling to find a country or region not having been visited by at least one on our members. It would appear many have been to all sorts of obscure and unpronounceable destinations, including possibly every member having been to the Caribbean. Except your author that is. A mention for Pat who has probably been to more countries than us all but is unwell at the moment. We send our very best wishes.

We enjoyed most of the sampled wines, I say most as one of them - a Yellow Tail 'Jammy Red Roo Australian Wine' with no declared grape style. Now Yellow Tail normally 'produce' eminently satisfactory wines but this one was adjudged so sweet it reminded some of our number of the late lamented VP sherry available in bulk at the corner shop.

We then moved on to a Chapter and Verse Chardonay which came in a flat plastic bottle, excellent for transport, being easily stackable and light weight. The plastic bottle did take some opening as, being plastic, it had an attached screw top, bless the EU. The wine was reported as 'very fruity' scoring 8 on my somewhat partial system. Next was a Chateau Tanunda Barossa Shiraz, very tasty but did beg the question of how many Chateaux there

are in Australia. The 19 Crimes referenced the colony's past, it was a Sauvignon Blanc – a decent drink, apparently.

The Black Pig Margaret River Rose was, despite its Captain Pugwash (see paragraph 1 above) connotations, an excellent tippie which quickly disappeared from the bottle.

Black Pig usually produce some premium reds which are vegan friendly and go particularly well with slow cooked pork shoulder – go figure! A Freeman's Bay Sauvignon Blanc scored highest on the day with a 9, followed closely by a Villa Maria Sauvignon Blanc. I am afraid the lookalike Jam Shed Shiraz did not come up to Jam Shed's usual standard.

The joy of these meetings is the sheer scope of conversation included tonight were Giant Squid, rescue fish, a fire extinguisher at King's College Chapel, what to call 'First Nation' people, and why do they keep changing their name? School reports – Nick's geography report – "I don't know how he found the classroom." Margaret on the front page of the local newspaper. Families of 10, 12 even 13 children – how of earth did they manage? All these as well as access to the doctors, neighbourhood news, planning and old photographs – sepia verses black and white – which shows the generational spread of our group. That is all I heard from one end of the table, goodness knows what was being discussed at the other end but it did cause considerable merriment.

Next meeting March 25<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm at Alans Way

