

Drymen Wine Club

February 2010

February, the month of love and romance, but we have done that particular theme to death over the years so I thought that we could deviate and choose wines celebrated in the movies!

Bill thought he had to appear in character and turned up at Martin's house dressed as a gangster with a toy machine gun, a veritable reject from the movie Casablanca, a movie which was awash with champagne and brandy. In redemption he did bring along a pre-mixed Campari champagne cocktail, a refreshing blend of Campari and Piper Heidsieck Brut, with a tiny strawberry in each glass. No 1926 Veuve Clicquot then, Bill?

Consuela opted for the Keanu Reeves movie, A Walk in the Clouds. Based on the Las Nubes (The Clouds) winery, Consuela had found their Torrentés, a fresh, fruity, scented, yellowish wine, a smooth blend of four grape varieties. This made a good transition from the champagne to the burgundy.

Amelie was patriotic with a white burgundy. How this connected to the movie bearing her name, unless it referred to the character's job in a Montmartre café, required some explanation. The wine, a Burgundian Chardonnay, was lemon and pear with a smooth, creamy mouthfeel. Amelie sourced the Bouchard Aîné et Fils through friends in Paris but it is available in this country at under £9 per bottle.

Martin lives at the bottom of the village, not the most southerly point which is nowadays the reserve (I use the term advisedly!) of the estate, but at the bottom of the hill past the church. His property sits on a raised promontory with views over the Endrick and the five-span bridge. His Victorian conservatory, strung with Chinese fairy lights, had a lovely view of the starry night sky and we gazed in search of Alistair's UFO. (If anyone does see a UFO over Drymen, please email me tom@drymen.eu and I shall report on the findings.

Alistair's partner, Suzanne, is a paediatrician – I can never remember if that's feet or children! She gave us the horror story that the village is to be extended by up to a hundred houses in the social housing category. Basically this means that if the Council wishes to decant people from less desirable urban areas, there will be housing stock available in Drymen. Exactly where these houses are going is, as yet, a mystery although Suzanne suggested that the plan is to divide the allocation over several areas; one next to the hotel; one behind the car park; and one further afield possibly along the Balmaha road or up towards the school. We needed a drink after news like that.

I had never heard of the movie "Sideways" until XXXXXXXXXXXX spoke of it. Apparently this film did a fantastic advertising campaign for Pinot Noir which was why we were sipping a cherry and plum concoction from New Zealand.

This was a very gentle and soft, full flavoured Oyster Bay from Waitrose, £9.49 per bottle.

With a sense of the macabre, and the wearing of an ice hockey mask, XXXX offered us Hannibal Lecter's "nice Chianti" but spared us the liver and fava beans. From M&S, Via Ulivi Chianti is a deep ruby colour with ripe berry flavours to match and a soft finish. Under £5 per bottle on a multi-buy.

Charles had insisted that he would supply the closing drink for the evening's theme. I am so glad that we accepted his offer. We may never again have the chance to sample a 1940 Armagnac as depicted in Casablanca. What a beautifully smooth and warming tipple. No wonder Rick always had a glass in his hand. Here's looking at you, Charles!