



Friends of All Saints' Church Cuddesdon

Newsletter No. 3 April 2025

From the Chair



This is our third newsletter, a year on from the first. In March 2024 I wrote:

'Our vision of a successful event is primarily one of shared enjoyment, coupled with the opportunity to raise funds toward the restoration of the fabric of All Saints' Church'

Looking back through the diary, I believe we have stayed true to this vision.

The *All Saints' Carol Service* with the Intermezzo Choir on 22nd December was a beautiful lead into Christmas and Friends were privileged to serve refreshments after the service.

After Michelangelo ...
After Raphael was an impressive and thoughtful display of some of Robert Wilson's collection of engravings and etchings. Friends were delighted to be invited by Robert to host the opening reception. It was a very enjoyable and interesting evening, which also helped boost our funds.



The Friends committee are excited about the next event, *Sparkling Wine Tasting*, with two local experts guiding us through seven very different bottles of bubbles. It will have happened by the time you read this. Sorry if you missed it but Philip Spinks, one of the wine experts and Friends' treasurer, has kindly written 'Exploring the World of Sparkling Wines' for this newsletter.

The village now has a wonderful *Community Orchard*. Many villagers joined in the planting of the fruit trees, showing real interest and enthusiasm for the project, and giving enormous encouragement to the orchard committee. A short summary of how the idea of an orchard turned into reality is included in this newsletter.

The success of all these events is thanks to you and your ongoing support. Thank you for your care and sense of responsibility in helping maintain and nurture all that we value in Cuddesdon, Denton and Chippinghurst.

We continue to raise funds towards the restoration of All Saints' beautiful lychgate. Anyone who has been involved in restoration projects will know that unexpected developments occur. Further inspection has revealed that the stones supporting the wooden structure need attention. This means that the final cost and timing of the repairs are, for the moment, unknown. We are all united in our desire to see the beautiful historic lychgate restored for another millennium. We will keep fundraising. Please continue your generous support and progress will be made!

Once again, huge thanks to the incredibly hard working and enthusiastic Friends' committee. It continues to be a surprise to me that our meetings are, unlike many other committees, a pleasure and not a trial!

Anne Stern

Friends of All Saints' Committee Members

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|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Chair | Anne Stern | annestern99@gmail.com |
| Secretary | Lynda Ware | lyndaware@aol.com |
| Treasurer | Philip Spinks | treasurer.foasc@outlook.com |
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| | Evie Bennett | |
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Exploring the World of Sparkling Wines

Philip Spinks

Sparkling wine is a personal favourite and regularly linked to key events in life - from a night on the town to a wedding or a F1 victory! However, not all sparkling wines are created equal. Whether Champagne, Crémant, Prosecco or Cava each offers something unique in terms of taste, origin, production method, and price point. Let's take a look!

Production methods are key and a big influence on cost. There are at least seven different production processes used in sparkling wines, the three main methods being Traditional (or *Méthode Champenoise*), Charmat (or Tank Method), and Ancestral, each differing in where the secondary fermentation occurs and how the wine is handled afterwards.

Traditional Method (*Méthode Champenoise*) is the basis of modern Champagne along with Crémant and Cava. It involves a second fermentation in the bottle, creating the characteristic bubbles. The base wine is made and often blended before being bottled with sugar and yeast, undergoing a second fermentation in the bottle, which traps CO₂. Additional complexity comes with age and leaving the wine on the dead yeast cell, or lees, is a large part of this process. Once ageing is complete the lees are removed, and the wine is topped up with a blend of wine and sugar (dosage) for the desired sweetness. It is a long and expensive production method.

Charmat Method (Tank Method) is the basis of Prosecco and Lambrusco. The secondary fermentation takes place in large, pressurised tank instead of in individual bottles. This method allows for faster, less costly production and is often used for lighter, fruitier sparkling wines that are not meant for storing and ageing.

Ancestral Method (*Méthode Ancestrale*) sometimes referred to as Pet-Nat starts much like the Traditional Method, but the wine is bottled before the primary fermentation is complete, allowing the remaining sugars and yeast to ferment in the bottle. There is no addition of extra yeast or sugar and the result is a lighter style of sparkling wine. This is the oldest method and is used for wines like Blanquette de Limoux and is seeing a resurgence in Pet-Nat wines.

Champagne is what most people think of when you talk about sparkling wines. It is produced exclusively in the Champagne region of northeastern France and due to a long history and a significant investment in careful marketing and brand protection, is expensive.



Champagne is typically made from three grape varieties: Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier. The resulting wine is crisp with fresh acidity, and flavours range from citrus and apple to richer notes of brioche, nuts, and toast. It comes in a variety of sweetness and style to suit any occasion.

Crémant is also made in France, but outside the Champagne region, in areas like Burgundy, Alsace, and the Loire Valley. Like Champagne, Crémant is produced using the traditional method. However, Crémant is typically more affordable than Champagne. It can be made from various grapes depending on the region, such as Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, or Chenin Blanc, resulting in wines with fruity and floral flavours, some also capable of ageing.

Prosecco is Italy's iconic sparkling wine, and a favourite of many people due to its approachability and competitive price point. It is produced mainly from the Glera grape in the Veneto region. It is made using the Charmat method. This process results in bigger bubbles and a fruitier, lighter style of wine, often with notes of green apple, pear, and citrus. Prosecco is often sweeter than Champagne and Crémant, making it a popular choice for casual sipping or in cocktails like the Bellini.

Cava is Spain's flagship sparkling wine, primarily produced in the Catalonia region. Like Champagne and Crémant, Cava is made using the traditional method. However, it can often be found at more competitive price points as the marketing and branding over the years has been less well controlled, occasionally leading to some top producers preferring to label their wines as Spanish Sparkling Wine. Cava is typically made from indigenous Spanish grape varieties such as Macabeo, Xarel-lo, and Parellada, which contribute to its crisp acidity, earthy and lanolin flavours, with notes of citrus and nuts. It offers great value.

Obviously, we must mention the rise of English sparkling wine which has gained significant international recognition for its quality, often rivalling or beating Champagne at its own game. The cool climate and chalky soils of England, particularly in the Southeast, are very similar to those found in the Champagne region, making it an ideal location for growing the classic Champagne grape varieties. Global warming has also resulted in areas such as Kent having a similar climate to Champagne 30-40 years ago, resulting in a number of French Champagne houses investing in the UK. The wines are typically made using the traditional method. Price points can be medium to high as volumes are typically lower than Champagne and there is a huge investment needed to grow the industry.

There are many other regions producing sparkling wines including Australia, USA, Brazil and Germany to name but a few - all are worth at least one try!

The world of sparkling wine is rich and diverse, offering a wide range of flavours and price points. Whether you're enjoying the luxurious complexity of Champagne, the refreshing effervescence of Prosecco or the value-driven qualities of Cava there's a sparkling wine for every palate and occasion.

The Story of the Orchard



A few years ago a group of people started discussing ways to plant more trees in the village. Nicko and Gillie King were keen to plant woodland trees and wild plants to increase wildlife habitat, and Ron Stern had been on the search for land for a community orchard for several years. We were joined by the very practical skills of Salt Sellar, Richard Palmer and Roger Buswell, and then in January last year we got lucky when Richard Farrant and his sister Susan Jupp agreed to let us have that half acre of land below the Rec on a long lease for the extortionate rent of one apple a year. In March 2024 the Parish Council agreed to be involved and take on the lease, and the orchard committee of the Parish Council was set up. Its members were Roger Buswell, Richard Dzaks, Nicko and Gillie King, Richard Palmer, Salt Sellar, and Ron Stern

It took many long months for the lease to get signed, but in the meantime we were allowed to plant sixteen 13-yr-old trees which had been donated by a friend of Ron's because they had outgrown his allotment in Port Meadow. These were rather brutally pulled up by a digger and transported to Roger Buswell's barn on trailers which were so full of trees that it looked like a forest on the move ...shades of Birnam Wood and Dunsinane.

Twelve of those sixteen trees have survived

On the finance side, we are very grateful to the Parish Council and to South Oxfordshire Council, sponsored by our District Councillor Sam James-Lawrie, who contributed £1,500 each to cover the solicitor's fees.

With the lease signed we were able to submit a grant application to the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment.

We were awarded a grant for £6,450 on the 19th of December by the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment funded by South Oxfordshire District Council.



This grant covered the cost of 47 fruit trees, a store and accessories such as hoses and a ladder.

The complex grant applications and process were skilfully managed by Nicko.

The trees were planted on the weekend of the 1st/2nd of March by a fantastic team of volunteers.

We had to wait until the trees could be delivered and the ground had dried out enough for planting. In fact the volunteers planted 70 trees, including trees donated by members of the village and those grown by Ron Stern bringing the total to date to 117. The farmers' know-how and grunt contributed by Salt Sellar, Richard Palmer, Roger Buswell and Graham Sellar hugely helped make it happen.

The varieties will be shown on a map which John Cook is preparing and Jez Turner is going to print. They include apples, plums, pears, damsons, greengages, mirabelles, apricots, quinces, cherries and a medlar.

Some rustic benches and tables have now been put in place. Thank you yet again, Salt!

So the orchard is now planted and growing for everyone in the village to enjoy as the trees mature

Our next event will be a summer picnic.

This has certainly been a community achievement that will be enjoyed by the community for many years to come.

The Orchard Committee



From the Treasurer

If you want to join Friends and get on the mailing list then do please pick up a leaflet from the Church or one of our events, or alternatively email me at:

treasurer.foasc@outlook.com

There is no membership fee or further obligations. Should you wish to donate then just let a member of the committee know or pay directly to:

All Saints Parochial Church Council Cuddesdon
Sort Code: 20-65-21 Account: 80001376 Ref: Friends

Our bank account is managed on our behalf by the PCC and all funds are ring-fenced for our projects.

Please contact me should you wish to utilise Gift Aid, which adds 25% to any donations.

Philip Spinks

