



Object of the Newsletter

To promote the appreciation of fine Scotch Whisky (and the drinking of it) amongst my friends and to spread the word on the joys of single malt. By the way, I do not profess to be an expert, I am merely expressing an opinion on the whiskies I am tasting. “Slange”

This issue I look at the Bladnoch 8 year old, as this is the month we celebrate the birth of Robert Burns, with Burns nights being held around the world. The Bladnoch distillery is the most southerly whisky distillery in Scotland and is just a few miles down the road from where Robert Burns was born. I mentioned in the previous newsletter that the Highland Park is a good accompaniment with Haggis, I can't say the same about this one. However some of you may not like Haggis (I can't understand why), so this gives you a whisky option for Burns night.

Tasting Notes;

Color - Straw

Nose - Fruity, Sea air, hints of Coffee

Palate - bold, a little creamy, citrusy (lemon, grapefruit, green apples)

Finish - Long with a touch Lemon peel

**“Inspiring bold John Barleycorn!
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!
Wi' tippenny, we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquabae, we'll face the devil!”
Robert Burns**

*If you have a personal favorite and you would like it to feature in future “Slange” newsletters, please let me know.
I can be contacted at my website www.scot-talks.com.*

*“Slainte Mhath”
Paul Bissett*





A wee bit of History

Bladnoch, the most southern distillery of Scotland, was originally a farm created between 1814 and 1817 by the McClelland family. The family has been the owner of the distillery until 1871 when it was given up to the company T&A McClelland and Co who made some alterations in 1878.

The distillery has been closed often since 1930 and has been mothballed in 1993.

During the 40's, T&A McClelland became part of the Irish distiller Dunville & Co from Belfast. This company did not reopen the distillery, but sold it after World War II to Ross & Coulter who resold it to A.B. Grant who finally reopened the distillery under the name of Bladnoch Distillery Ltd in 1956.

A.B. Grant was taken over by Ian Fisher, shareholder of McGown & Cameron from Glasgow. The distillery has also belonged to Inver House Distillers Ltd between 1973 and 1983, before closing its doors again for 2 years. After this last closing, it has been acquired by Arthur Bell & Sons who modernized the distillery. The group became part of Guinness who acquired the D.C. L. group one year later to become the distillery branch called "United Distillers & Vintners".

UDV closed the distillery in 1993, together with Balmenach, Rosebank et Pittyvaich.

Raymond Armstrong, an Irish businessman acquired it on year later. A visitor centre and an Internet site were opened in 1998, in the hope the distillery would reopen soon. This was the hope of lots of whisky lovers, as the malt coming from this Lowlands distillery is really outstanding.

This reopening happened in 2000.

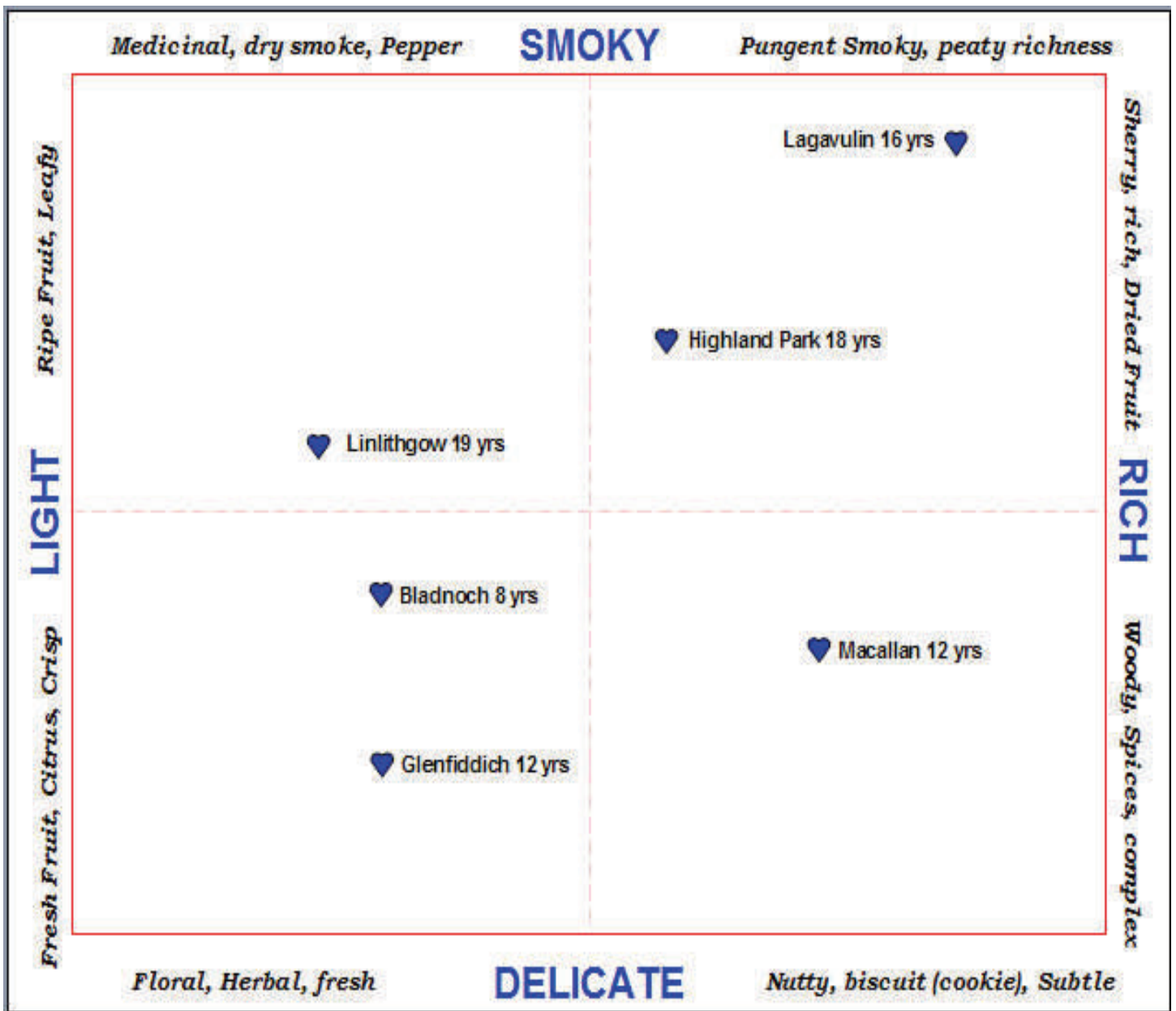


Lachlan's Laws;

"Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he will sit in a boat all day drinking beer."



Below is a simple guide to help you choose your single malt Whisky, and the flavor notes I get from it, hopefully you will get something similar. Being Scottish I recommend you find a likely candidate and try it in a bar before buying the whole bottle. With each issue of the newsletter I will add in another Whisky to the flavor map. This issue; **Bladnoch 8 year old**. For more information on Bladnoch whiskies go to <http://www.bladnoch.co.uk/>





Burns Supper (Happy Birthday Rabbie)

In 1801, on the fifth anniversary of the death of Robert Burns, nine men who knew him met for dinner in Burns Cottage in Alloway to celebrate his life and works. The Master of Ceremonies was a local minister a liberal theologian and an equally liberal host. Hamilton Paul and his guests shared Masonic brotherhood with Rabbie and Paul devised an evening which looked a bit like a lodge ceremonial, centered on a fine fat haggis; with recitation and singing of Burns' works and a toast (in verse) to the memory of their friend and hero.

It was such a jolly evening, all agreed to meet again the following January for a Birthday Dinner for the bard, little knowing that they had invented a global phenomenon that we know as the BURNS SUPPER which still broadly follows the Reverend's original plan.

Burns' popularity grew rapidly after his untimely death and the idea of meeting annually to share his poems and songs in the bonds of friendship caught the public imagination. Some Ayrshire merchants in Greenock followed with the first Burns Club Supper in January 1802 and the West coast towns with strong links to Rabbie reached out and joined in the new festival: Paisley, Irvine, Kilmarnock and Dumfries.

Typically, a dozen or more men sat down to dine - as often working men as the middle classes - sometimes in a bar Rab had frequented. But the real link was his poetry with its message of love, freedom and the essential value of humanity. Many early suppers were organized by Burns Clubs who exist today, but a big boost in participation came with the big literary Burns Suppers, the original organized by Sir Walter Scott in Edinburgh in 1815 with Hogg the Ettrick Shepherd giving the Immortal Memory.

Going Global

The first Supper outwith Scotland was at Oxford University in 1806 (hosted by a few Glasgow students) with London seeing its first Bard-day party in 1810. Wherever there were Scots merchants trading in the English county towns, festivals sprung up over the next twenty years.

The format was popular - whether as part of a wider club or an annual combination of party and poetry. In those days many Scots received a good education at home then packed off to foreign climes to seek a fortune (or at least build the empire) and the Burns Supper followed them. Army officers held India's first supper as early as 1812; traders travelled about the same time to Canada and were Addressing the Haggis in a colder January wind than they'd remembered back home; merchants and ministers (and maybe even a few convicts) carried Burns' works to Australia with Festivals from 1823 and the first formal Burns Supper in 1844; while the poets own nephew helped found the city and Burns Club of Dunedin in New Zealand.

To read the full article, go to <http://www.scotland.org/features/item/the-legend-of-the-burns-supper>