

New reign over UK vineyards

25 Jul 2011 by Tamlyn Currin

HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, aka Camilla, second wife of Prince Charles, has just landed the job of President of the [United Kingdom Vineyards Association](#) (UKVA), taking over the reins from Lord Montagu of Beaulieu (who has been named Honorary Lifetime President).

The statement from the UKVA goes on to say, 'The UKVA President is the figurehead of the UK wine industry; the UKVA is the central body of growers and producers, through which the industry is kept informed of legislation and all technical matters, and advised on best practice in viticulture and winemaking. The national competition for the industry, the [English & Welsh Wine of the Year Competition](#) is organised by the UKVA and is the only competition of its kind to be judged solely by Masters of Wine.

'Her Royal Highness has already visited English vineyards Camel Valley in Cornwall and Denbies Wine Estate in Surrey, where she was impressed by the quality of the wines. English and Welsh wines have been served on a number of Royal occasions.

"We are delighted and honoured that HRH The Duchess of Cornwall has agreed to be our new President", commented Ian Edwards, Chairman of the UKVA. "Her support of this growing industry acknowledges the phenomenal growth in awareness of English and Welsh vineyards and wines. We are immensely proud of the achievements of many of our wines and are looking forward to continued success and increased volumes. I would like to extend, on behalf of the English and Welsh industry, our heartfelt thanks to Lord Montagu, whose unfailing support for our vineyards and wines stretches back decades."

'Former UKVA Chairman, Bob Lindo [pictured above with the Duchess at Camel Valley, photo kindly supplied by Bob himself], added: "Her Royal Highness's evident interest in our industry's wines makes her an ideal figurehead for our industry. We are all so proud that she will be our new President."

Camilla is not totally new to the wine world. Her father, Major Bruce Shand, retired from army service and became a partner in Block, Grey and Block, a prestigious wine merchant in Mayfair, London (where [Harry Waugh](#) did time as a junior clerk). He later became involved with Ellis, Son and Vidler of Hastings and London. On the Prince of Wales' official website, it says, 'The Duchess's father Major Bruce Shand was a wine merchant and passed on his love for whites, reds and rosé to his daughter.'

On her visit to Denbies, it is said that Camilla described the Chalk Ridge Rosé as 'absolutely delicious!', thereby demonstrating that her palate is as discerning as those of the [IWC judges](#).