New arrival at Shaw + Smith

22 Jan 2013 by Jancis Robinson

Yesterday, while co-founder Michael Hill Smith AM MW was battling snow and ice in London, Shaw + Smith in the Adelaide Hills for the first time welcomed a senior winemaker from outside the family. Michael's cousin Martin Shaw, founding winemaker, showed the ropes to Adam Wadewitz, 35 (pictured). As Hill Smith explains the arrival of Wadewitz, 'the old rock band gets a new guitarist'.

Wadewitz, 35, proved himself in particular in another relatively cool Australian wine region, Great Western in Victoria. He worked first at Seppelt and then Best's, where his 2011 Shiraz won the prestigious Jimmy Watson Trophy last year. He is an Adelaide oenology graduate who has worked in several other Australian wine regions as well as in France, Chile and the US. Clearly a bright spark, he was Joint Dux of the Len Evans Tutorial 2009 and the year after that a finalist in the Gourmet Traveller WINE Winemaker of the Year.

Wadewitz's duties will include not only maintaining the reputation of Shaw + Smith's established Adelaide Hills classics, Sauvignon Blanc and M3 Chardonnay, but continuing to refine their Shiraz and Pinot Noir, and developing the reputation of the Tolpuddle Vineyard in Tasmania's Coal Valley recently acquired by Shaw + Smith. The debut 2012 Tolpuddle Chardonnay and Pinot Noir will be released later this year. It is not yet known how recent fires on the island will affect the 2013 vintage, but South Australia, the country's principal wine state, was largely spared the worst of the recent exceptionally hot weather in Australia.

Shaw and Wadewitz have been planning their strategy for the 2013 vintage by phone and email, Wadewitz arguing the case for a new order of open fermenters in order to increase the whole-bunch proportion in this year's reds.