



Written by
Jancis Robinson
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Marcia Waters MW



18 March 2019 *A service of Thanksgiving will be held on Thursday 28th March for Marcia Waters. The family have requested people wear spring colours and, in lieu of flowers, there will be a collection at the church for charities that were chosen on Marcia's behalf. The service will be held at 12.30pm at St. Nicholas Church, Cuddington, Bucks HP18 0AP.*

14 March 2019 *We were all looking forward so much to the next Master of the Vintners' Company...*

At last November's Master of Wine awards ceremony in Vintners' Hall the roof was raised when the current Master of the Vintners' Company unexpectedly made reference to a woman sitting quietly at the back of this ancient livery hall in the City of London. He seemed so pleased to announce that a particularly popular MW, Marcia Waters, would succeed him and become the first female Master of the Vintners' Company since it was founded in 1363. Cue wild applause

and a standing ovation.

Last night, also in Vintners' Hall, that same Master Sir Andrew Parmley opened the fourth International Wine Trade Dinner, a biennial event attended by wine luminaries from all over the world, by announcing solemnly that Marcia had just passed away. Marcia had had a bout of breast cancer many years ago and went for a routine check up a few weeks ago anticipating nothing sinister. She was to be disappointed, and must have been especially concerned about her daughter, currently studying at Exeter university, since Marcia lost her husband to cancer some years ago.

Marcia, 59, became an MW in 1990 and was closely involved with the Institute of Masters of Wine, having been chairman in 1999 and chairman of the all-important Education and Examination Board from 2009 to 2015. I vividly remember her calm, wry defusing of a volatile situation when we MWs got together a few years ago – again in Vintners' Hall – to discuss the nature and existence of the dissertation required to qualify as an MW.

Marcia, one of the nicest, gentlest but most impressive MWs, won the WSET's top award, the Vintners' Scholarship, in 1985. She was a buyer for Victoria Wine when they were the country's largest retailer and Colin Anderson MW was in charge. She then moved to Tesco as buying controller. While travelling in South Africa for Tesco she switched roles to work for Anglo American in the UK, selling Boschendal and Vergelegen wines.

When her daughter was born she opted for more local work, at nearby Waddesdon Manor, where her focus was wines owned by the Rothschild family. (Not bad.) Her duties included running tastings and educational events, which I'm sure she was very good at. She then moved to the most common MW role, that of consultant, in this case connecting with vineyard owners and winemakers, and selling wines she enjoyed.

Marcia's entry on the Masters of Wine website simply says: 'We all have different, and often strong opinions on all thing vinous, but the passion is always energising when a group of MWs get together!' That group has lost a valuable and intelligent member far too soon.

Chris Davey, managing director of OW Loeb in its most recent heyday, will take Marcia's place as the next Master of the Vintners' Company. He is likely to be succeeded by a woman, in this case one outside the wine trade.