



Sacavin Courier



NO. 57 SUMMER 2010

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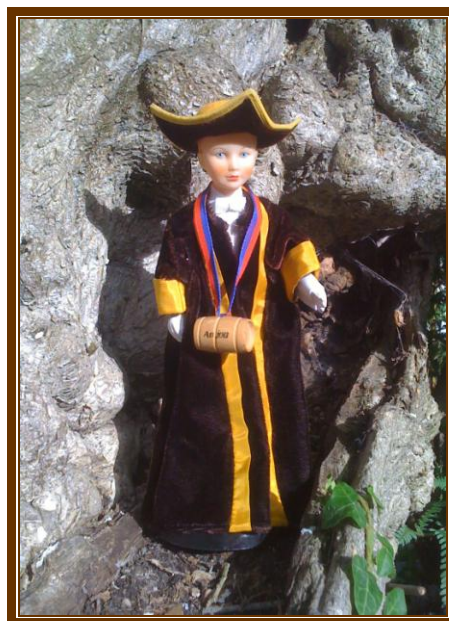
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THE SACAVIN CHALLENGE CHAPTER 3

So popular has the 'Challenge' become that this year, on 17th February, some 72 members and guests gathered at the National Liberal Club and, spread across 9 tables, put their tasting skills to the test. The success of these events is very much down to the tireless efforts of our Chef de Cuisine and Echanson, Des Holland and the growing numbers underline our gratitude to him. By way of a postscript, he has kindly supplied this issue of the Courier with the following record.

As I promised I have pulled together the results of the comparison of the wine matched for each course of our dinner and, with the odd anomaly, the views are remarkably consistent! Some of the differences may be due to my recording skills after a good dinner, others maybe to some tables mixing up the wines?! (better system next year).

Marks out of 10 awarded	Table	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	total
Domaine Pascal Pibaleau Azay le Rideau 2005	Chenin Blanc	8	7	6	6	5	7	8	6	8	61
<i>Saint Peray Jean-Luc Colombo "La Belle de Ma" 2008 Northern Rhone</i>	Roussanne	6	5	6.5	7	7	8	6	7	7	59.5
Menetou-Salon Domaine Teiller Rouge 2006	Pinot Noir	6	5	6	6	6	7	4	6	8	54
<i>Mercurey Domaine de L'Europe Guy Cinquin 2006 Burgundy</i>	Pinot Noir	8	7	5	8	8	8	6	6	7	63
Saumur Champigny Domaine des Roches Neuves 'Marginale' 2006	Cabernet Franc	7	7	6	7	7	10	7	7	6	64
<i>Chateau de Chantegrives Grave 2005 Bordeaux</i>	Merlot 50% Cabernet Sav. 50%	8	6	7.5	8	6	7	8	8	6	64.5
Coteaux de L'Aubance Les Fontenettes Domaine de Haute Perche 2005	Chenin Blanc	7	7	7	7	8	9	9	7	8	69
<i>Fairview La Beryl Blanc 2008 Paarl South Africa</i>	Chenin Blanc	7	4	6	8	6	8	8	6	8	61

Although this year I was unable to match the grape varieties, I think I did get the style right to match each course, and I feel this is the best selection I have presented for the *Sacavin Challenge*. My thanks to Denis at Le Chais for his advice, Stuart Craggs for transporting the wines and Jane Berger for arranging with our friend Christian Papin to supply the Coteaux de L'Aubance as well as the excellent Cremen de Loire we all enjoyed before dinner.

For those readers who did not attend the tasting I have provided basic details of each wine above including the grapes. Those who attended will, I am sure, still have their copy of the wine tasting 'booklet' provided.

Before looking at my respective on the wines we tasted I can tell you that we paid an average of £18.50 per bottle.

Fish Course: 5 of the 9 tables preferred the Roussanne from the Rhone although overall the vote was in favour of the Chenin from Azay le Rideau. I thought 2005 vintage was better! In any case this wine was £4 less expensive.

Main Course: An overwhelming vote in favour of the Burgundy, perhaps I was a little naive in setting the Domaine Teiller against the Mercurey made by the renowned winemaker and balloonist Guy Cinquin. The Pinot Noir from the Loire was £2.50 cheaper, helps to balance the books!

Cheese Plate: Although the overall vote was close, I was most disappointed that only table 6 gave the 'Marginale' the full 10 out of 10 that I expected from everyone. When set against a very nice but middle of the road claret, I thought that this wine would be acclaimed as the best wine Des has put to the 'challenge'. Looking back, perhaps we were drinking the wine too early, and it should have been opened sooner! However the majority that preferred the Grave may like to know that we paid £8 less for this slightly older Merlot /Cabernet Sauvignon blend produced by a long established family estate. Thierry Germain continues to receive high praise for this wine, Michel Bettane says that the 2004 Marginale 'was the best French wine he tasted in 2009' Perhaps we should try this wine again, price permitting!

Dessert: For the first time 'Chapter 3' enables me to present 'my' grape, the Chenin Blanc, New World v Old World, although in this case the 'old' Les Fontenettes was planted 10 years ago whereas La Beryl Blanc comes from two areas planted some 30 years ago in the heart of Paarl wine district. As a youth working in Scruby's Wine Merchants I remember selling Paarl Amber Hock. I had no idea that 'my grape' existed at that time and of course we would not be able to describe it as hock today.

Back to the 'challenge', although both wines scored well the clear preference was for Les Fontenettes made by Christian Papin in the village of Saint-Melaine-sur-Aubance. Many of you will recall the extensive tasting that Christian hosted on our visit to Haute Perche in 2008.

Although these two wines display many similar characteristics, both on the palate and on sugar analysis, they are made in a very different way. In Paarl the grapes are carefully gathered, placed on a bed of straw and left to dry out to a raisiny state losing 75% of their moisture before pressing. In Haute Perche the grapes are left on the vines and hand-picked, requiring successive gathering of botrytis grapes ready for pressing.

Price wise the Les Fontenettes would normally be more expensive than the South African wine but in our case, we paid less.

We are planning to have another 'Sacavin Challenge' in the new year, in early February. If you have any suggestions on the choice of wine, either the Loire or the challenger please let me know. e-mail hollanddes@aol.com before mid September please.

P.S. Description of 'my' grape.

Since joining Sacavin and taking on my role on the committee, I feel I have discovered the Chenin Blanc, I love Jancis Robinson's description taken from her book Vines, Grapes and Wines.

'Chenin Blanc is a magical chameleon of a grape, although remarkably few of the thousands of growers who harvest it each year even realize that magic is there. It is used, in various and distant corners of the globe, to produce exquisite sweet whites so long-lived that few bottles survive to reach their peak; attractively nervy, medium-dry wines with one of the most curious bouquets know to wine tasting; basic table wine; the spritzzy; fine sparkling wines ranging from austere dry to stinking rich.'

AGM AT QUEENS CLUB



Our thanks to Foudad Ghali for the colour photographs in this issue of the Courier.

AGM MATTERS

Holding our AGM in the middle of April was no bad idea. The clocks had gone forward three weeks earlier, heralding “British Summer Time” and, although anyone who takes that name too seriously is generally disappointed, the evening of Saturday 17th April turned out sunny, warm and still. The perfect occasion, therefore, to serve our Vin d’Honneur outside, on the terrace in front of the President’s Room at Queens Club, overlooking the Centre Court. For some, it was also an opportunity to observe for the first time a game of Real Tennis which, we discovered, was being played in the indoor court adjacent to the terrace.

However, that all took place following the meeting itself. Sacavin should take pride in the fact that its members generally get through the business of their AGM in less than 45 minutes, leaving the rest of the evening for more serious matters, those associated with enjoying a good dinner together. 2010 was no exception, even allowing for items of the unusual, such as our Grand Commandeur giving notice of his intention to retire. Yes, it is true, having held the office for what will have been 16 years, Derek Sheen plans to hand over the reins at next year’s AGM. In making this announcement he said, “I believe that a ‘vibrant’ organisation such as this needs a transfusion of younger blood! Both tradition and logic indicate that my successor should be our Sénéchal, Geoffrey Wheal who has been an outstanding Chairman of the Management Committee for several years now. I am therefore delighted to warmly nominate Geoffrey as my successor to take on this ‘onerous and demanding’ task.” In accepting Derek’s nomination, Geoffrey praised Derek for his unwavering commitment to Sacavin both personally and as Grand Commandeur, a record of service unlikely ever to be equalled and one upon which we had all come to rely so heavily. The necessary steps will now be taken to obtain the approval of the Grand Conseil in Angers.

On display in the President’s Room following the meeting was the digital archive assembled by Chef du Protocole Alastair Bellingham, a computerised slide show made up of

photographs largely taken in the last decade of members and guests at various Sacavin trips and functions. This is the first attempt at an electronic pictorial record of Sacavin activities and brought back many memories. A considerable effort by Alastair but one he pointed out was not yet complete as there are a number of gaps in this record of events and nothing prior to 1997. He appealed to anyone with suitable photographs to make them available, with a note as to ‘when and where’ taken, and also to ‘who’ because the Commanderie has been in existence long enough now for some faces to be difficult to identify without prompting. The photos would be returned to their owners once electronic copies had been made.

We shouldn’t end this report without some mention of our Chef de Cuisine and Echanson, Des Holland. The dinner would not have been the happy occasion it was without his organisation and attention to detail. Yet sadly he was prevented from joining us by the grounding of flights following eruption of the Icelandic volcano at Eyjafjallajökull. Marooned in Spain following a family celebration there, his eventual escape might well make for a Courier article, should we be short of material for our next issue! Fortunately there were others within the Brightlingsea community who knew the whereabouts of the wine Des had been storing for the dinner, otherwise 2010 might well have gone down in history as the Sacavin’s first ever “dry” AGM.

SUMMER LUNCH

This was something of an experiment, a Summer luncheon at the National Liberal Club, as an addition to our normal calendar of four events a year. We had a feeling this might be popular when a survey of the 40 present at the AGM produced 42 signatures indicating they would attend, and that despite the further 3 signatures of those who could not!

Nevertheless, the 66 who eventually applied exceeded all expectations. Perhaps this should not have been a surprise. An attractive venue, centrally located and at a time that avoids the need to stay overnight. Before the luncheon finished there were already calls for it to be repeated.

Particularly pleasing was the presence of several of our more senior members. Amongst those welcomed by Grand Commandeur Derek Sheen, in his luncheon address, were Leslie and Laura Garner and their guest Doris Gill, three members all inducted in France before the formation of the British Commanderie. They were all, including Doris's late husband Frederick and her sister and brother-in-law, attendees at the Rallye Aérien International which effectively revived Sacavin in Angers after the war. This connection explains the wings which support the hannap on our crest. Doris, or 'Dot' as she is more generally known was originally an Officier but had spent much of her more recent life in Zimbabwe and was thus a lapsed member. However, when Derek mentioned her request for reinstatement, the response from all present was a resounding "Aye!".

Our only surviving Founder member, John Braun, had also been hoping to attend but, on the advice of his doctor, had sent his apologies. We made special mention of him in our toast to absent friends and John has since written to say his health has improved and that he was looking forward to the chance to attend next year, should the event become a fixture.

We were grateful to receive from Pat Salzedo a delightful miniature Chevalier ("La Petite

Sacavin", pictured on the front cover), dating from the inauguration of the Commanderie and presented to her late husband, Leonard, together with other artefacts. It was Leonard who composed the fanfares and march used at our Chapitre.

Everything went well. On arrival we gathered in the sunshine on the Club's terrace for pre-lunch drinks and what appeared to be an endless supply of superb canapés. Gradually the approach of thick black clouds threatened the occasion but mercifully the rain held off until it was time to find our tables in the David Lloyd George room. Conversation over lunch was lively, yet the mood was relaxed. Food from Britain complemented by wine from the Loire provided the perfect background and, without doubt, everyone enjoyed themselves.

Menu

Canapés served on the terrace
Saumur Blanc Domaine des Roches Neuves
"Cuvée Insolite"
2007 100% Chenin Blanc

Scottish poached Salmon fillet
 Kentish Asparagus & Jersey Royals
Sancerre Rouge Domaine du Carrou 2008 100% Pinot Noir
and/or
Pouilly Fumé Laporte "Les Duchesses 2007 100% Sauvignon

Basket of English Berries
 With Cornish Ice cream
Coteaux du Layon Château de la Roulerie 2008
100% Chenin Blanc

Coffee

When the time came for members to bid their friends farewell, it became apparent that many were heading for a theatre, or perhaps an art

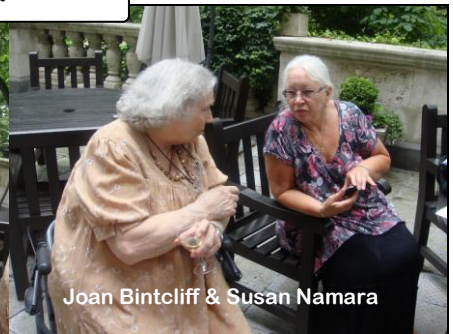
OUR SUMMER LUNCHEON



Margaret Harris & Felicity Bellamy



Geoffrey Wheal, Jane Berger & Brenda Wheal



Joan Bintcliff & Susan Namara



Sherlie & Peter Vidler with their nieces,
Jane Harvey & Susan Mitchell



John Moon



Barbara Moon



Tony Moore with Graham & Janet Macfarlane



Ray Lindley & Elizabeth Edey



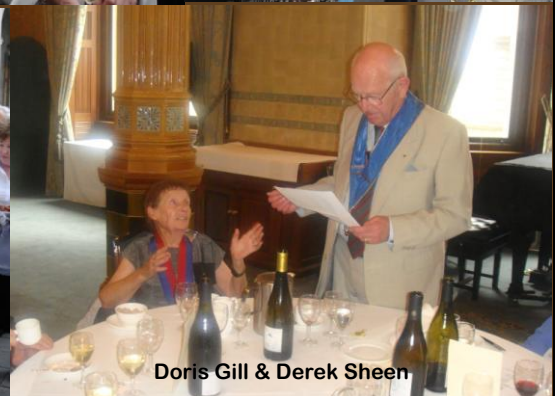
Felicity Holmes & Veronica Davis



Howard Davis & Keith Lockyer



Laura & Leslie Garner



Doris Gill & Derek Sheen



Robert Aitken Sykes & Richard Ridler



Anna & Graham McKowen



Des Holland & Graham Macfarlane

gallery, rather than going straight home. Others seemed reluctant to leave at all, only finding their way out into Whitehall Place a

full hour after 'carriages' had been scheduled to arrive. Evidence, surely, of a successful function.

We make special mention of two who attended the Luncheon because they were newly-weds! Chevalier Sarah Hawkes was married to Michael Sheridan just a couple of weeks before the event. We offer them our warmest congratulations and wish them every happiness together.



SUMMER DRINKING

Rosé wines are enjoying – or, rather, the drinkers of rosé wines are enjoying! – great popularity in France. Rosés represent 25% of total wine sales, while their share of AC wines is an astonishing 36%. Michel Leterme, who liaises between our Commanderie and the headquarters of the Confrérie in Angers, has sent us a number of cuttings from the French press, out of which we can derive useful pieces of advice.

1. Rosé wine is a perfect accompaniment to snack lunches – quiches, salads, pizzas, etc.
2. Rosés produced in Provence will have been produced as rosés, not as the cast-offs of inferior reds. Patronise Tavel (Aquéria, Maby, Mordorée, Pelaquié), Provence proper (Gavoty, La Calisse, Sainte-Roseline) and Bandol (Pibarnon, La Suffrène).
3. Rosé champagnes are also produced in strict conformity with traditional techniques.
4. A good rosé should be “light” and low in tannins. Light means the alcoholic strength should not be above 13%. The presence of tannins would be indicated by depth of colour, so a rosé should be light in colour as well as alcohol.
5. White wines for summer drinking should also not be over-strong. Two familiar problems with white wines are sugar and oak. The following will make good summer drinks: Sauvignons from Touraine, Muscadets, Entre-deux-mers and “vins gris”.



Frank Coe 1919 - 2009



It was with great sadness that we learnt, just before Christmas, of the passing of Frank Coe after a protracted illness.

Frank's association with the Sacavin dated back to 1981 when he was inducted at the Chapitre de la Boucherie at Butchers' Hall. Subsequently he progressed to 1st Halberdier (1988), Chancelier (1989) and Delegué General (1996), eventually retiring from the Committee in 2000.

Educated at Reigate Grammar School, he joined the army in 1939 and was commissioned into the Essex Regiment, serving mostly in the Middle East. Captured in 1942, he spent 15 months as a P.O.W. in Italy. On the cessation of hostilities, he joined the family wine and spirit business, where he discovered his true vocation.

Over time he established himself as a wine merchant of some repute, and for many years he was responsible for the selection, purchase and presentation of our wines, a task which he performed supremely well. Older members will remember fondly his 'in between courses' descriptions at our dinners, which greatly added to our enjoyment of his selection, and also the marvellous summer functions staged by Frank and his wife Pat in their lovely home and garden at Dunmow.

We offer our sincere condolences to Pat and the family.

Reg White 1935 - 2010



Reg White, who died on May 27, was a highly influential figure in British multihull sailing; his boundless passion for the sport earned him an Olympic gold medal and an international reputation as a distinguished boatbuilder.

Born at Brightlingsea, Essex, to a family of Oyster merchants, he developed an interest in both building boats and racing them as a young boy, when the rowing boat used by his father to transport oysters was rigged with a home-made spar and sails. From that moment, boats were the fulcrum of his universe. By 21, he had his own boatbuilding company. Four years later this became Sail

Craft, manufacturers of fast sailing dinghies whose reputation for quality would become global.

The high point in a long career came in 1967. He was approached by the designer Rodney March to help with the first ever Olympic-class catamaran, the Tornado, selected as a new class for the 1976 Montreal Games. With this

boat Reg and his brother-in-law John Osborn won the first ever Tornado Olympic gold medal. They returned to Brightlingsea where they were feted by a crowd of thousands and soon afterwards were appointed MBE.

Reg was inducted in 2008 so, sadly, the majority of us in Sacavin had only recently got to know him. He died suddenly on the hard at Brightlingsea Sailing Club after finishing an

evening pursuit race with his grandson in a new clinker-built 18ft Brightlingsea One design, *White Spirit*, almost identical to the boat he had first raced as a teenager 60 years before.

We extend our sympathy to his wife, Lyn, and their extended family, numbering some 29 over 3 generations.

Robert Cointreau 1921 - 2010



From left to right: John Addey, John Braun, Hector Mackenzie, Robert Cointreau, Charles Whitfield, Bill King at the First Induction Dinner, Vintners' Hall, London on 24th February 1970.

We have to report the sad news of the death of our first Grand Commandeur, Robert Cointreau on 5th April. His funeral was held in his home village of Savennières on 12th April.

Robert was a quiet distinguished man and, of course, had a prominent connection with the family firm of liqueur distillers founded by the brothers Edouard-Jean and Adolphe Cointreau near the town of Angers in 1849. It was in 1948 that a new generation of Cointreaus took over the company's leadership – brothers Robert and Max, and their cousin Pierre – dividing the running of the company between them. A family connection with the great cognac house, Rémy Martin led to both companies combining forces in the 1960s in various business operations and eventual merger in 1989.

A Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur, Robert was our founder Grand Commandeur from 1969 until his elevation to Grand Maître of the Confrérie in 1971, when he was succeeded by Colonel Hector Mackenzie. Robert and his wife Violette were good friends to our Queen Mother who they entertained in their Savennières home. Long standing members will remember him presiding over events in Anjou and there is little doubt that he made a major contribution to Sacavin both here and in Angers.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

Management Committee meeting **Tuesday 21 September 2010** at
The National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place at 11.30 am



Excursion to Sancerre **Tuesday 12 to Sunday 17 October 2010**
(Includes Chapitre des Vendanges in Angers Saturday 16 October)



Chapitre 2010 at Vintners' Hall **Tuesday 23 November 2010**
Calling letters to be posted at the beginning of October



Sacavin Challenge Chapter 4 **Wednesday 2 February 2011 (provisional date)**
Wine tasting over Dinner at the National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place
Look for confirmation of the date within the Calling letter for the Chapitre

