



Sacavin Courier



NO. 72 WINTER 2017

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A delegation from the Commanderie de Grande-Bretagne attend the Chapitre des Vendanges at the Greniers St-Jean in Angers.

Our thanks to Martin Hart, John & Christine Muggleton and John Ingram for the photographs in this issue of the Courier.

Late Summer Lunch at the Oriental Club

Saturday 2nd September 2017

A grand turnout of 56 chevaliers and their guests gathered at the Oriental Club in early September to enjoy a fine summer lunch together. This is the second time Sacavin has held an event at this club, and we all agreed that it is a superb venue, in the heart of central London.

We began in a beautifully furnished room for Vin d'honneur, which was a well made Cremant de Loire from Gratien & Meyer. Conversation soon began to flow, and we were ushered into lunch to hear a short talk about the Oriental Club given by the Club Secretary, Matthew Rivett. He spoke about the interesting history of the Oriental Club, with plenty of anecdotes about how the club was formed, and how in 2017 it is still very much a thriving institution.



Oriental Club Secretary Matthew Rivett

The Oriental Club treasures its rich history and the extraordinary characters who have been associated with the Club, since the Duke of Wellington founded the Club as the first and only President, almost 200 years ago. It has an assured place in history. In literature, it has been a reference point throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, with novelists such as William Thackeray and Lytton Strachey referring to the Club, and countless others drawing from its stable of colourful characters.

The Oriental Club was founded by returning officers and officials from India and the East who had witnessed both wondrous and challenging sights. The Club was a valued haven in a London.

Major General Sir John Malcolm coordinated the founding committee in 1824 and advertised a Club that would draw its Members from 'Noblemen and gentlemen associated with the administration of our Eastern empire, or who have travelled or resided in Asia, at St. Helena, in Egypt, at the Cape of Good Hope, the Mauritius, or at Constantinople.' Nowadays the membership is more diverse, with one third being ladies.

The first home of the Oriental Club was in Grosvenor Street, only a few hundred metres away from its current home. It remained there for four years before moving to Hanover Square where a new Clubhouse was built.

By the 1950s, the Oriental Club was in difficulty. The post-war members had no taste for old-fashioned Clubs and the Hanover Square building required massive expenditure beyond the means of the Oriental Club. At first, the Committee considered selling Hanover Square and seeking a more economical home, but then the Chairman, Sir Arthur Bruce and his Committee developed an elaborate plan.

Aynsley Bridgland, another Member of the Club and a property developer, suggested that, instead of selling the Hanover Square site to a third party, to make it profitable the Oriental Club should be its own property developer. Thanks to the support of its Members, the existing building was duly demolished to make way for a new office block, which was rented out successfully.

The Oriental Club's handsome new home was Stratford House. The building was constructed in the 1770s for Edward Stratford, later the second Earl of Aldborough. Stratford paid £40,000 for the site (formerly occupied by the Lord Mayor of London's Banqueting House) along with the Robert Adam-inspired building.

LUNCH AT THE ORIENTAL CLUB



Vin d'honneur served in the small Drawing Room



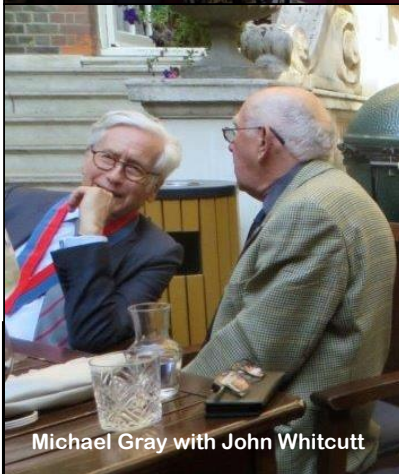
Raymond Harris, Christine Muggleton & Martin Reynolds



John Ingram with Freda Mottram



Listening to the Grand Commandeur in the Main Drawing Room



Michael Gray with John Whitcutt



Relaxing after lunch in the garden of the Calcutta Light Horse Bar



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 The house was improved over the years with new plumbing and a second storey on the east and west wings in the 1890s. However it was in 1908, when Lord Derby bought the lease, that the most extensive alterations occurred. He purchased additional property in Marylebone Lane, removed the stables and built a Banqueting Hall with a grand ballroom above (the last privately owned ballroom to be built in this country). It was a spectacular room of Italian design which was converted when the house was acquired by the Oriental Club.

When Stratford House was bought by the Oriental Club in 1960, more alterations were required, as the needs of a Club were different to those of a town house of the aristocracy. The ballroom was converted into two floors of bedrooms, additional lifts were installed and the Banqueting Hall was converted into a Dining Room. Recently eight further bedrooms have been added.

The Oriental Club is proud of its rich heritage, some of which is catalogued among the impressive collection of books in the Library, acquired throughout the centuries. The Oriental Club also has an extensive art collection which brings the history of the Club to life.

Matthew then joined us for lunch, which proved to be a most convivial affair as we had chosen an Oriental menu. John Ingram said a very appropriate grace – which was:

“We give thanks for the food before us,  
 For those beside us,  
 For the reason that unites us  
 And for the friendship that grows between us.”



The wine matching proved quite challenging for me, but there were many compliments for the exquisite pairing of the Salmon Tandoori and the Chenin Blanc. They really did go together beautifully.

### MENU

Basil Mango Salmon Tandoori  
 with Tamarind Chutney

*Pierre-Jean Sauvion Chenin Blanc 2016*  
*Domaine de Montcy Cheverny Blanc 2014*

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Black Sesame Duck Breast  
 with Green Mung Dal and Pilau Rice  
*Côte Roannaise 'Eclat de Granite', Domaine Sérol 2015*

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Pistachio Kulfi and Chocolate Sauce  
*Coteaux du Layon Saint Aubin, Domaine Cady 2015*

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Coffee and Chocolates

After lunch the Grand Commandeur thanked Matthew Rivett for his talk, and the Oriental Club staff for a really splendid oriental lunch. He also thanked Duncan Burnett and Felicity Bellamy for their organisation of the event. Several Sacavin members repaired to the Calcutta Light Horse bar afterwards. As usual the great bond of the enjoyment of Loire wines brought Sacavin friends together for another very successful late summer lunch, this time with an oriental flavour.

**Felicity Bellamy**

# Le Chapitre Pierre Aguilas

*Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017*

The fizz and anticipation was palpable as 61 Chevaliers and their guests gathered for the Chapitre Pierre Aguilas at Vintners' Hall on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017. Our Chapitre was held in the Drawing Room, which has recently been carefully restored and renovated. The marvellous trumpeters sounded their fanfare and the Grand Commandeur declared the Chapitre open.

He began by explaining why we wished to honour Pierre Aguilas, Grand Maître of our order since 2000, as he has just retired. He was the first wine grower to hold the post. He expanded the influence of Sacavin in France and abroad, hence the new Chinese Confrerie. He ran his 30-hectare vineyard at Chaudefonds-sur-Layon with his wife Janes. He also found time to become president of at least four important wine bodies in the Loire. He received national recognition when he was made a Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Merite.

We were very kindly entertained at his vineyard over a decade ago, and we very much look forward to visiting Chaudefonds-sur-Layon in May 2018 when Pierre's son Antoine will be greeting us. Pierre is now Grand Maître d'honneur. He is succeeded as Grand Maître by Laure Pertus, who sadly could not be with us this evening due to a sprained ankle. We send her our very best wishes for a speedy recovery.

We welcome Véronique Jérosme, our new Délégué Angevin. We greatly look forward to being entertained at her home, Château Marchais, in May. We also welcome Dominique Patrault, Patricia Hulbron and Francois and Martine Vendangeon.

The Grand Commandeur then announced he had one promotion to make within Sacavin. Felicity Bellamy has been a chevalier since 1982, and on the committee since 2012. He described the successful events she had organized, and mentioned the articles she had written for the Courier. He had great pleasure in promoting Felicity to Commandeur.

With several committee members taking up new ceremonial roles the induction ceremony

began, with three inductees joining the order. Freda Mottram was proposed by John Foley, who has known her and her late husband Eric for almost 40 years. Freda was born and educated in Worthing and became a secretary. She has three children and seven grandchildren. Many family holidays have been spent in France, and Freda developed a love of all things French. With Eric she ran a successful watch company importing Swiss watches. We welcome her most sincerely.

John Thurlow was proposed by Philip Wood and lives with his wife Jan, near Colchester. They have three children and four grandchildren. John began his adult working life as an engineer, then switched to teaching, becoming a science teacher. Next, he took up aviation, including being a Chief Flying Instructor and a pilot. He belongs to several professional organisations, as well as being a Freeman of the City of London, a Rotarian and member of Probus. He enjoys Loire wines and we are sure he will prove a great asset to Sacavin.

Ray Lindley was very pleased to propose Elizabeth Edey, who was born in Nottingham. Her father was in the colonial service, so Elizabeth spent time overseas, including Kenya where she was educated in a convent. Eventually settling in the UK she became a teacher. She has many interests, including serving on the district council and is committed to local politics. She enjoys gardening and greatly enjoys the wines of the Loire. She has attended many Sacavin occasions and we warmly welcome her into our ranks as a Chevalier.

The trumpeters played Optimé, as we sang to welcome the new inductees. This vastly improved the quality of our singing! Then

trumpets sounded the end of the chapitre, and we entered the splendid Vintners' Hall for dinner. We are grateful to several Sacavin members for their part in buying and delivering the wines for the evening. All the help which goes on behind the scenes often goes on unnoticed, and so here is a "thank you" from the Ecuyer!

After the fanfare, the Grand Commandeur entered with the new inductees. Grace was said by Chevalier Sid Price. We enjoyed a delicious dinner with fine fruits of the Loire vines.

***Vin d'honneur***

*Bouvet Ladubay NV Saumur  
Méthode Traditionnelle, Chenin Blanc*

***Menu***

*HOT SMOKED SEA TROUT,  
puy lentil salad, crayfish & rocket pesto*

~\*~

*Domaine Henri Beurdin, Reuilly, 2016  
Sauvignon Blanc*

~\*~

*CONFIT SHOULDER OF LAMB  
fondant potato, squash purée, glazed autumn vegetables &  
mint jus*

~\*~

*Domaine Frédéric Mabileau, Les Rouillères,  
St-Nicolas de Bourgueil 2015 Cabernet Franc*

~\*~

*CHEESE BOARD  
a selection of English and French cheeses*

~\*~

*WHITE CHOCOLATE PANNA COTTA  
caramelised apple & ginger rubble*

~\*~

*Domaine de Haute Perche Coteaux de l'Aubance 'Tradition'  
2015  
Chenin Blanc*

~\*~

*COFFEE & CHOCOLATES*

~\*~

*Choice of Cointreau or Dalmore 15-year old Single Malt*

banks of the river Blythe, and visited Snape Maltings.

In September we were at the Oriental Club for a late summer lunch organized by Chevalier Duncan Burnett. As expected we enjoyed excellent food and drink.

Next year we will be celebrating our Golden Jubilee, as it will be 50 years since the British commanderie was formed. We are planning a selection of special events to mark the occasion. On 31<sup>st</sup> January the Lure of the Loire dinner will be held at the National Liberal Club. The menu will be Loire themed to match a choice of 6 Loire wines throughout the evening, travelling the length of the Loire. It is in the capable hands of Chevalier Max Brittain with assistance from Commandeur Felicity Bellamy on the choice of wines. There will be a rolling screen presentation of photographs from fifty years of the UK Sacavin Commanderie.

The AGM will be at Queens Club on April 14<sup>th</sup>. From 14<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> May it is our biennial trip to the Loire organized by Commandeur John Foley and his wife Marie. We will stay near Angers at the hotel Loire et Sens. The trip will include a visit to the Cointreau distillery, the business of our first Grand Commandeur Robert Cointreau.

There is now to be a new visit included in the trip. The Grand Maître Laure Pertus has informed us that the City of Angers has kindly offered to host us for food and drinks at a very nice venue in the city on the Thursday evening.

In September we are planning to have another one of our very popular Late Summer Jazz Lunches at the National Liberal Club. The Sacavin trio of Adrian Macintosh, Max Brittain and John Reece-Jones have kindly agreed to entertain us with their fine playing.

As a finale to 2018 the Chapitre will be here in Vintners' Hall. We have some surprises planned already and we trust that it will appropriately conclude what should be a memorable year.

The Grand Commandeur then spoke to the assembled company, detailing the events we had enjoyed over the last year. We had a Burn's Night Supper at the National Liberal Club. Then in May Chevalier Sid Price organised an excellent visit to Suffolk, staying in Aldeburgh for a few days, and visiting Adnams Brewery and Shawsgate vineyard. We also ate amazing seafood at the Shed on the

He welcomed our new inductees Freda, Elizabeth and John and said how delighted he was that they have joined Sacavin. We all look forward to getting to know them better. He thanked Steve Marcham, the General Manager of Vintners' Hall, together with all his staff both in the kitchen and in the hall for giving us such a lovely evening.

The Grand Commandeur concluded by wishing everyone a Happy Christmas and prosperous and healthy New Year. He hopes you will all succumb to the Lure of the Loire.

Véronique Jérosme our Délégué Angevin, read a message from the Grand Maître Laure Pertus. She said Pierre Aguilas wished to thank us for naming our Chapitre after him. Our Chapitre is the annual trip for some of us from France to join you, and forge stronger links with the two Confréries. This year François is now a member of the Great Council.

They are very happy to welcome us in May with an unforgettable trip to Angers. She

proposed a toast to the French Sacavin friendship with the UK Sacavin.

After that John Thurlow spoke on behalf of the new Sacavin inductees saying thank you for their welcome. He mentioned many worthy quotes about wine ranging from warnings, to good advice, choices of wines and fine dining. His sources included the Bible, Jane Austen, Disraeli and Shakespeare to name but a few. My favourite was from Ecclesiasticus:-

"Wine is as good as life to a man, if it be drunk moderately; what life is then to a man that is without wine? For it was made to make men glad."

That concluded our wonderful evening in Vintner's Hall, our spiritual home. We all enjoyed the Sacavin camaraderie as ever and look forward to our very special year of celebration in 2018.

Felicity Bellamy



## Le Chapitre des Vendanges

*Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2017*

This year a delegation from our Commanderie visited Angers to attend the Chapitre des Vendanges, the first to be presided over by our new Grand Maître, Laure Pertus. Jane Berger, John & Marie Foley, Richard & Gillian Ridler and John & Christine Muggleton made up the party, with the four officers amongst them appropriately robed and hatted to join in the ceremonial procession. They were all warmly welcomed by their French colleagues.



While in Angers, John & Marie met with Laure Pertus and Dominique Patrault over a planning lunch to help map out arrangements for our forthcoming May visit to the Angers/Saumur region.

## LE CHAPITRE PIERRE AGUILAS



Maureen Smith, Shirley Zangwill, Gillian Ridler & Diana Whitcutt



Sid Price with John & Jan Thurlow



Brenda Wheal & Rosemary Burnett



New Chevaliers John Thurlow, Elizabeth Edey & Freda Mottram



Responding to our welcome



Dominique Patraut leads the singing!



Véronique Jérosme brings greetings from Angers

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A solicitor by profession and descendant of the Scottish Churchman and prolific hymn-writer, Horatius Bonar, Alastair had appropriately acquired a Scotsman's interest in whisky, about which he was very knowledgeable. He had a particular regard for the malt from the Isle of Arran distillery and, as a member of the Savage Club, was regularly one of the group who went to the Scotch Malt Whisky Society to select the whisky for their tastings. Perhaps unusually for a Scot, he was also passionate about cricket, a familiar figure at Lord's with a deep and acute knowledge of

Illness prevented Alastair attending our functions in recent times, so it is our more seasoned members, and those who are also Savages, who will remember him. Phrases such as “A true gentleman” and “great company” are common amongst their tributes, while others also recall enjoying his Scottish humour and wise conversation.

At London Polytechnic College she studied Marine Biology, going on to join the Royal Zoological Society, of which she was elected a fellow. She also studied under Professor Leonard Strang at University College Hospital, with 18 months spent in the USA, at the University of Florida, Gainesville.

Prior to her spell in the USA, Valerie had joined Manor House Hospital's Operatic Society, performing in *The Beggar's Opera*. This association continued on her return, with Valerie eventually joining the committee. It was a mutual love of singing that brought Valerie and Martin together, with the two of them also chorus members in productions by the Chelsea Opera Group. They married in 1977.

Attendance at Covent Garden indulged a passion for opera and ballet but Valerie also

shared with Martin a wide interest in the Arts generally, through the National Art Collection Fund and membership of the both the National Trust and English Heritage.

A vigorous reader, particularly of detective novels, Valerie was also an accomplished cook, something she inherited from her mother. No surprise then that this interest in gastronomy

led to her joining Sacavin in 2011. Her easy-going nature made her delightful company at our gatherings. When, in September, she joined us for the Oriental Club lunch, very few present realised how ill she had become. Kind, efficient and thoughtful, we are the richer for having known her and offer our sympathy to Martin in his sad loss.

### Alastair Bellingham 1938 – 2017

The incapacitating illness which led to Alastair retiring from our Management Committee and, ultimately, to his death at the beginning of December engender great sympathy amongst our membership. It seemed an unfortunate twist of fate that someone as experienced in the world of medicine as Alastair should himself be struck down with such a cruel and devastating condition.



Highly respected in his field of medical science, Alastair was Professor of Haematology at King's College, London from 1984 to 1997 and also held the chair of haematology at University of Liverpool where, for many years, he gave the annual student wine lecture. Amongst other accomplishments, from 1993 to 1996 he was President of the Royal College of Pathologists, at whose premises in Carlton House Terrace our 1997 Chapitre was held. It was there that Alastair was inducted into the Sacavin.

While retiring from a career devoted to medicine, he continued a parallel vinous one with no less enthusiasm. He was already growing vines in Cahors where he and Julia had a cottage. He also planted a small vineyard at his home in the Wiltshire village of Teffont Magna, mostly Seyval Blanc, which our members inspected when the Bellingham's hosted a Sacavin Summer Party in 2005. We have happy memories of that time, and many recall Alastair's collection of specialist trees which formed the basis for a somewhat challenging quiz.

In 2009 he took us to Hickstead, for a very successful weekend exploring Sussex vineyards. Alastair was by this time our Chef du Protocole, a position he held until this year. Responsible for much of the background organization for our functions, perhaps the most onerous was trying to bring some order to the unruly group who formed the procession at our Chapitres. A task likened to herding cats.

A Savage Club member of long standing, it was Alastair who thus introduced us to the National Liberal Club, where we have held many memorable functions over the years, as well as our Management Committee meetings. It was there that he contributed much to the smooth running of our association and it is, perhaps, from those meetings that Alastair's formidable ability to generate puns will be best remembered, a delightful mix of brilliant and atrocious! We all miss him and offer Julia and his family our heartfelt sympathy.



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

Management Committee meeting **Wednesday 17 January 2018**  
The National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place at 11.30 am

Lure of the Loire Celebration Dinner **Wednesday 31 January 2018**  
The National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place  
*Calling letters were dispatched 11 December 2017*

Management Committee meeting    **Wednesday 7 March 2018**  
The National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place at 11.30 am

AGM 2018 **Saturday 14 April 2018**  
The Queen's Club, West Kensington, London W14 9EQ  
*Calling letters will be dispatched at the end of February 2018*

Golden Anniversary Voyage to Angers/Saumur Region **Monday 14 to Saturday 19 May 2018**  
*Calling letters were dispatched 8 November 2017*

Management Committee meeting    **Wednesday 13 June 2018**  
The National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place at 11.30 am