

# SACAVIN



# COURIER

## COMMANDERIE DE GRANDE BRETAGNE DE LA CONFRERIE DES CHEVALIERS DU SACAVIN D'ANJOU

No 18

Winter 1988/89

It makes it even sadder that we have to begin this Winter issue of our Newsletter - a time of year when the weather matches feelings of sorrow - with an Obituary for the Grand Commandeur:-

Colonel HECTOR ANDREW COURTNEY MACKENZIE, OBE MC TD JL JP

The death of Hector Mackenzie, our revered Grand Commandeur, on 2nd December 1988, has brought sadness to the whole Sacavin Order, not only to his companions in the British Commanderie, but also to the many friends he had in the parent body in Angers.

Hector was prominent in the Confrerie, virtually from the date of his Induction on 7th June 1969 until the day of his decease. No one who attended our last Chapitre can have failed to admire the distinguished manner in which he presided over what was to be his final appearance, and it was a considerable pleasure for him that his predecessor in the post, Robert Cointreau, was able to be present as he took pride in welcoming his youngest son, Christopher, into our ranks. In all his time as Grand Commandeur, I don't think Hector ever once failed to attend our annual Banquet and Chapitre, despite having to travel a greater distance than even those members of our parent organisation.

Prior to his appointment as Grand Commandeur, Hector served as Senechal, a post to which he was elected when the British Commanderie was established on 25th November, 1969. Whenever his many other commitments permitted, he was present either to chair our Annual General Meetings, lead Parties abroad or, on one very special occasion (to his great personal delight) welcome members to his own dearly loved corner of Scotland where, amongst other duties, he was for so many years Chieftain of the Highland Games.

Hector took pride in achieving the highest standards in all the enterprises which he undertook, hence the qualities which gained high praise for Dalmore Highland Malt Whisky in his grandfather's time were further enhanced under his own skilful guidance. In due course he controlled the running of three fine quality malt whisky distilleries and became Chairman of the Maltsters Association. When appointed by Whyte and Mackay Distillers to manage their wine subsidiary he tackled the difficult task of running a London and Aylesbury based business from Scotland with great skill and diplomacy and his willingness to understand sassenach problems soon won our affectionate support and the loyalty and appreciation of this correspondent.

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The qualities of leadership which enabled Hector to manage Jarvis Halliday so well had already served him as a soldier in World War II when he saw active service in North Africa and Sicily followed by the D-Day landings in 1944. He was twice wounded, and decorated with the Military Cross for gallantry under fire. One of his many post-war activities was continued service as a soldier in the Territorial Army, service recognised by the award of the Territorial Decoration and, subsequently, of the OBE. He also found time to serve the community of his county and district in the appointments of Deputy Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace.

Above all, Hector was a family man and in all his many endeavours enjoyed the loving devotion of his wife, Daphne, who has so strongly supported him through his final illness. Invariably when I met with him for the first time after a holiday break, he would enquire after my family and their goings on and would be only too happy to recount his own family adventures, often involving boisterous nautical voyages in the family cruiser, characteristically named using the first two letters of each of their children's christian names - as you will now realise, Hector was also a first class sailor.

With big families there is always a greater risk of accident and when one of my three soldier brothers died suddenly Hector and Daphne were amongst the first to send their condolences to my parents and myself. It was cruel fate that so soon afterwards they would have to bear the loss of their own eldest son, James, a sadness borne with great dignity by them both.

Whilst sending our sincerest condolences to Daphne, Lucilla, Roderick and Christopher on the loss of a wonderful husband and father, we remind ourselves that Hector leaves behind him a tremendous record of service which will be hard to follow. With Sacavin he leaves the British Commanderie healthier and richer in every way for his firm but gentle leadership and us all with a very high standard to maintain. A man should leave this world a better place for his having lived in it - Hector was such a man, may he rest in peace.

Chris Wilkinson.

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We have not only lost Hector since the previous issue of the 'Courier'. Just after it had appeared, we learnt of the death of Irene Kyriakides, the wife of Nick, our Chef de Voyage. Irene was a regular attendee at our functions. Her charming smile and the warmth of her personality endeared her to us all and we are very sad she is no longer with us.

The sincerest condolences of the Commanderie are extended to Nick Kyriakides, his children and grandchildren, upon their bereavement but we are sure they will find comfort that Irene, who died after a long and painful illness, is now at peace and spared the suffering she bore with great courage.

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After the sadness of these announcements, it is good to remind ourselves of the happiness of our November event, the

#### CHAPITRE de la DEMI-LUNE

The idea for calling this the Chapitre de la Demi-Lune came from the Green Park Hotel being in Half Moon Street and the time it was held coinciding with the moon concluding its second quarter. Now, the

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14th November 1988 seems especially poignant because it was the last time Hector Mackenzie was to officiate as Grand Commandeur at an Induction Ceremony. The occasion itself was light-hearted and joyous. After the various events when Hector had not seemed too well, this time he was in very good form and it was so heartening to see him savouring every moment. There were no thoughts of sadness, therefore, when he was escorted in to begin the Ceremony, surrounded by his Officers, and with former Grand Maitre and his friend of many years, Robert Cointreau, giving his support to the proceedings. Chef de Protocole George Wilks ensured that the necessary formalities for accepting the new Inductees into the Commanderie were observed and it was a further wonderful coincidence that the candidates included Christopher, the youngest son of Hector and Daphne Mackenzie and Robert, the elder son of Christopher and Hilary Wilkinson. At the time, though, it was of equal importance to Hector, as to us all, that we welcomed five new Members to Sacavin, they being:-

Peter BOUCH - who practices in the field of communications and is therefore fully aware of the importance of wine, especially those from Anjou, in improving communication between people.

Elizabeth BURROUGHS - who has supported our Delege-General - her husband David - on so many Sacavin occasions and, from now onwards, will be with us in her own right.

Patricia CALMEL - who is a solicitor with the Complaints Bureau but had so few complaints after our 1987 Visit to Anjou that it prompted her to join our Order.

Christopher MACKENZIE - who is working toward qualifying as a Wine Master but who, on the way, also finds time to savour the delights of the sporting, the musical and the film worlds.

Robert WILKINSON - who is already well established in a career in hotel and restaurant management with, we are sure, the wines of Anjou featuring prominently in his recommendations.

The Ceremony was followed by a marvellous Dinner. It was the first time Sacavin had visited the Green Park Hotel and the meal, arranged by Chef de Cuisine Norman Billington, was memorable, served with great felicity by a very obliging staff. The wines, chosen by our Chancellor, Derek Sheen, were not only outstanding but each excelled its predecessor as Dinner went on, so that the final wine - a Moulin Touchais - could almost be described as a collector's item and reached a peak of excellence which a guest described as "pure ambrosia".

Hector, as Grand Commandeur, welcomed the new inductees, his fellow Members and Guests with his unique blend of gentle courtesy and quiet charm. Robert Cointreau, our Past Grand Commandeur before he became Grand Maitre, brought a Welcome from France and Elizabeth Burroughs responded on behalf of the new Inductees. Looking back now, in these more sorrowful days, on the Chapitre de la Demi-Lune, those who were present can be so grateful that it was such a happy and intimate occasion. The Green Park hotel has a very 'country house' atmosphere and we seemed like one large family, enjoying each other's company once more. This is the important memory and the one that will abide.

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## OUTSTANDING 1988

Before we leave behind all thoughts of the Old Year, it is interesting to take note of what experts are saying about last year's Vintage. Although we, in Britain, had a pretty poor summer, weather-wise, our colleagues in Anjou and Saumur enjoyed fine, warm days, resulting in an early harvest, grapes high in sugar, alcohol degrees above normal and exceptional in Chenin grapes with the noble rot. This should make 1988 an excellent year for the dry whites and rosés, the sparkling wines and the reds and a superb year for the sweet wines. For these latter, last year is already being described as one of the great years of the decade, with the sweet wines comparable to those of the famous 1959s.

By contrast, weather conditions were not quite so favourable in other parts of the Loire. The Muscadets, though up to standard, yielded 10% less with Pouilly-Fumé and Sancerre, although good, 20% down on 1987.

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Mention of wines of our region also bring to mind the strictures of our Founder, Rabelais, who spent many happy hours imbibing them and encouraging others to do so as our Archivist describes in

### PROLOGUE TO BOOK 3

Good people most illustrious boozers and you, thrice precious gouty sirs, be raised at once to the Bacchic Council where, by tasting, you may test the substance, colour, odour, excellences, eminence, property, faculty, virtue and effect of the blessed and coveted liquor. Ennius wrote as he drank, drank as he wrote. Aeschylus used to drink as he composed, to compose as he drank. Homer never wrote on an empty stomach. Cato never wrote except after drinking. So, do not say that I am not following the example of good and praiseworthy men. If the wine is to the taste of your worshipful worships, let you drink it frankly, boldly, openly, freshly, without stint. May you, sound fellows, suffer from gout in your own right.

One day, Panurge asked Pantagruel if he should marry, yes or nay. Pantagruel sighed but did not reply so Panurge continued thus: "My Lord, you have heard my intention, which is to marry, unless by bad luck all the holes have been closed, stopped and secured. I beg you give me your advice"

"I advise you to do it", said Pantagruel "I counsel you to marry"

"But" said Panurge "if you thought that it was better for me not to marry ...."

"Then don't marry" answered Pantagruel.

"But" said Panurge "would you have me stay like this all my life? Single and without conjugal company?"

"For God's sake, marry then" said Pantagruel.

"But, good Sir, if my wife were to make me a cuckold that would be enough to make me lose patience ! I like cuckolds well enough, they seem quite good fellows to me and I like visiting their houses, but I'd rather not be one of them".

"That points you against marriage" said Pantagruel "for Seneca's maxim 'What you have done to others, be sure another will do to you' applies without exception".

"Ho, ho!" said Panurge "That's the very devil! Still, you see I can't do without a woman, no more than a blind man can do without a stick,

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for the funnel has to be kept in agitation; therefore, wouldn't it be better for me to find a good and virtuous woman to marry rather than change from day to day?"

"Get married then, for God's Sake" replied Pantagruel

"But" said Panurge "I have heard it said that the good and virtuous women have bad tempers. What if she were to beat me?"

"Have nothing to do with marriage then"

"But should I fall ill? The Wise Man says 'Where there is no woman, the sick man is in a bad way' ".

"You must marry then"

"But, if through illness, I were incapable of my marital duties, my wife might get impatient and give herself to another man. Not only would that not help me in my need but it would make everyone laugh at my misfortune".

"Dont run into marriage then" said Pantagruel.

Panurge went out and sought the Friar, Brother John. "Oh, my dainty arquebussing ball-bag" said he "my dear friend Brother John, give me your advice. Should I marry, yea or nay?"

Friar John answered him very heartily "Marry, in the devil's name. Marry and be quick about it. Ring the bells, call the bans, make the bedsprings sing this very night! What are you saving yourself for, for God's sake? Don't you know that the end of the world is nigh? Furthermore, if you don't keep your aspersory-tool in continuous exercise, it will lose its potency. I give you stern warning of that, my friend. Thus, by the lack of usage, as the clerks say, all privileges are lost"

"Good Lord" said Panurge "You go straight to the point. But if my wife made me a cuckold, I swear it would be enough to make me run stark naked in my shirt in the fields in the night".

"Not everyone is a cuckold who wants to be " answered Friar John judiciously. "If you are a cuckold, ergo your wife is beautiful, ergo you will be well treated by her, ergo you will have plenty of friends visiting you. These are monkish reasonings. This is what we monks call logic. Besides, you'll find quite enough left for yourself because beautiful women are notoriously generous with their rump. Listen to the bells of Varennes! What do they say? 'Marry! Marry!' Forward, my friend, yea, yea, yea".

Your Rabelais maxim for today comes to you from Tinteville, the worthy bishop of Auxerre who kept himself in roistering good health through the love of good wine: "Venus" he asserted "catches cold when not accompanied by Bacchus".

Marie-Térèse Baird

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1989 AGM

As is our custom, the first event of the New Year is the Annual General Meeting which is on MONDAY 13TH MARCH. The Montagu, Gloucester and Berkeley Suites of the PORTMAN INTER-CONTINENTAL, Portman Square, London W 1, have been reserved for the various activities arranged in

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connection with the AGM and commencing at 4 p.m.

Although expert knowledge plays a great part in discerning the qualities of a wine, the enjoyment of any wine depends upon the personal taste of the imbibor. With this as their guiding principle, a Wine Panel, to include Chevaliers David Burroughs, Frank Coe and Howard Davis, will sample, with the audience, several Loire wines and then comment upon them purely from a subjective point of view. The audience will be expected to match the comments of the Panel with their own impressions. Ecuyer Peter Morley will Chair the Panel and ensure a good room temperature is observed with the atmosphere continuing to be good for the AGM following on at 6 p.m. We will commence this with a Tribute to our dearly loved Grand Commandeur, Hector Mackenzie, who will be so sadly missed. The AGM Vin d'Honneur is at 7.15 p.m. with the AGM Dinner commencing around 7.45 p.m. The Application Form to attend the AGM is enclosed. The Agenda, Report of the Management Committee and Accounts for 1988 are also enclosed. The Management Committee hope that as many members as possible will attend and look forward to welcoming them on March 13th.

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#### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Further events planned for 1989 are:-

#### SUMMER WINE TASTING and BUFFET LUNCH

Old Bucks Head, near Horsham, West Sussex is the venue and SATURDAY 3RD JUNE the date, Delege-General David Burroughs and Chevalier Liz Burroughs are the Hosts for this year's Summer Wine Tasting and Buffet Lunch. David is responsible for the Wine and Liz the Buffet and, afterwards, both are organising a visit to Leonardslea. There is a limited attendance for this event so members interested in attending should make a note in their diaries now. The Application Form will be distributed early in April.

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#### MERE WINE TASTING

Chevalier Robin Yapp is very kindly hosting a Wine Tasting at his cellars at Mere, Wiltshire. Arrangements are being made in collaboration with Chef de Cuisine Norman Billington and, after the Tasting, a Buffet Lunch will be organised at a nearby hostelry. The date has yet to be confirmed but will be end of August, beginning of September.

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#### BIENNIAL VISIT TO ANJOU

With the usual two-years having elapsed, preliminary plans are being discussed for the Commanderie's next Biennial Visit to Anjou. As the Confrerie's Autumn Chapitre is traditionally the last Saturday in September - this year 30th September - the Visit will most likely be organised around this weekend but everything is provisional at the moment.

## 1989 INDUCTION and DINNER

The final event of the year will be our Autumn Induction Ceremony and Dinner. It will be on either the first or second Monday in November. Plans have only just commenced but this year's celebration of the bicentenary of the French Revolution will be the theme.

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## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

The Annual Subscription for all Active Members became due on the 1st January. Those not paying by Banker's Order and who have not yet met this year's dues are very kindly requested to send a remittance to the Treasurer:-

Mr M B Harris  
Harris Kafton  
28 Bolton Street  
London W1Y 8HB

The amount is £5 per member (£7.50 spouse rate) and cheques should be made payable to 'Sacavin'.

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## SECRETARIAT

The address for communication for the Commanderie is through the secretary:-

Mrs P M Salzedo  
363 Bideford Green  
Leighton Buzzard  
Beds LU7 7TX  
Tel: 0525 371126

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