

SACAVIN



COURIER

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

No. 30

Summer 1996

It is not just, as the song says, the days grow shorter as we reach September, the year itself seems to be getting shorter. It hardly seems possible so many months have passed since our Order visited our French friends and colleagues.



Biennial visit to Anjou 1995

as described by our Senechal Roy Clements

And then there were eighteen - from a promising response suggesting that this year would see a record number of attendees, illness and business commitments reduced the final number to 18.

As is the wont of us Brits abroad, the first words exchanged in greeting at our destination inevitably included questions on the journey: How was it? What was the weather like? Which route did you take? The answers added up to a travel agent's dream - by land, sea and air, as this year saw the opportunity for the rabbits and moles among us to use the Channel Tunnel.

Regardless of the route taken, everyone arrived in good time at Saumur and were suitably well-scrubbed, dressed, relaxed and quite "thirsty" for the early evening welcome "Vin de Honneur" given by our fellow members from Angers. This cocktail party was attended by Pierre Gatte, Michel Fleur, Guy Besmiers and Patrice Monmouseau who generously provided the Crémant de la Loire from his cellars at Bouvey Ladoubay.

It was at this juncture that the patron of the hotel made it known that a party from a German Wine Order were staying in the hotel. A spirit of entente cordiale prevailed and they joined us for a drink.

During the next few days the spirit of EC continued

to the point one evening when, at the end of dinner, the German party donned their robes and gave us a bit of theatre around the tasting of three wines that they had brought with them. Poor Rob Calmels became our "fall guy" and his reward was some obscure certificate in German alleging that he could determine the difference between German sweet and German dry. To this day we're not sure that he could, but it was late in the evening and as you can imagine, a fair drop had passed through our lips during the previous few hours!!

Day Two presented us with an excellent visit to the Cave des Vignerons de Saumur where we were hosted by the General Manager. Xavier Gomart who should be described as one of the new generation of French winemakers - young, qualified, enthusiastic and dedicated (don't think an itinerant Australian would be welcome!).

This cave is in a way unique, inasmuch as it was sunk like a well into the side of a hill (1958) to a depth of 25 metres with a horizontal passageway connecting the lower part to the bottling plant and Administration. Several of us paid a visit there in 1981 and remember at that time just a small building above ground. However today, with the Cooperative having grown to some 247 members, the increased production has required several high-tech buildings and rows of gleaming stainless steel tanks more reminiscent of an oil refinery than a wine producer.

Whilst continuing to produce the region's classic white and rose wines, they are today recognised as one of the leaders, if not the leader, in the production of fine Saumur Champigny.

As with our subsequent visits we were then lucky to see the arrival of the grapes from the first few days of the Vendange 1995 as they were discharged at the "Top of the Hill" to slowly find their way via vats, pipes, tanks and bottles to the packing room some 25 metres below and then some 250 metres along, to emerge out of the side of the hill and, in our case, into the throats of 18 thirsty Brits.

And so to lunch in St Hilaire St Florent. This village could be described as the capital of the Saumur Sparkling as it houses most of the big names associated with this wine. We paid a visit to the caves of Veuve Amiot which were established in 1884. Whilst the atmosphere of a family company still pervades, it is now owned by Martini Rossi. Our visit followed the classic lines of walking through miles (well it seemed like miles) of caves dug into the tuffeau surrounded on all sides with thousands of bottles of our beloved sparkling (they sell some 200,000 cases per year), ending with a splendid tasting of five of their styles. The day was drawing to a close and as we left we were each presented with a bottle of bubbly. Fortunately our hotel was in the same village so in no time we were able to "decontract", (as the French would say) before dinner with yet more Loire wine!!

Saturday, Day Three, and the anticipation of the Chapitre in the evening but no time to relax beforehand as we were off to Chinon and the cellars of Couly Dutheil. Here we were welcomed by Robert Couly who, whilst playing the good host and being as attentive as he could, had more than one eye on the arriving grapes from the very first vendange.

Couly Dutheil have built their reputation for fine wines by exercising the utmost care in the handling and selection of the grapes going to press. We witnessed the arriving grapes pass under the scrutinising eyes of some six employees who did not hesitate to remove any suspect bunch from the moving belt.

I'm not sure we were welcome but eighteen of us squeezed into the laboratory to witness the sampling by specific gravity the juice from the first pressing of 1995. Monsieur Couly pronounced his satisfaction as the indications were that it would produce a wine of some 12.5 degrees.

This good news still did not relax his vigilance on his beloved grapes but he continued to play the good host by personally conducting the tasting when he introduced us to his belief and theory that wine carries the characteristics of the soil in which it has grown. We were thus enticed to hold in one hand a quantity of soil whilst tasting the wine at the same time! The soil of the lower regions nearest the river suggested a clingy characteristic which manifested itself into a wine that clung to the mouth, whilst that of the upper (higher) regions grown on a lighter, drier soil gave a dryness to the palate. Such was Monsieur Couly's enthusiasm for this theory that we (or most of us) experienced the sensations he described. Putting this romantic view to one side, we were so impressed with the quality and finish of his wines that several cases were purchased and, if you remember, consumed at our own Chapitre 1995.

And so to the rest of the day. We were royally entertained to a light lunch (at our request) in the club rooms, or cellars to be more precise, of the Confrerie of Chinon followed by a walk through the Castle of Chinon in the footsteps of Joan of Arc then back to the hotel, change into dinner jackets and pretty frocks and away to the Chapitre in Angers.

As Chapitres go, this was as spectacular as any with representatives from many Orders on parade and numerous Inductees awaiting their turn to be accepted into our Conferie. As befitting such occasions the speeches followed and went on and on until nearly midnight when the Plat Principale was at last on the table! Not surprisingly most appetites had gone and tiredness was taking over. Oh well, when in Rome....! The bus journey to the hotel seemed endless and around three in the morning a weary bunch took to their beds.

Were we tired? If so, it did not show as quite early on Sunday morning your eighteen stalwarts set forth to invade the village of Martigne Briand, truly the heart of Anjou. The village was celebrating the beginning of their vendange with a fete "Belle Epoque" and as the title suggests, we joined in a truly "Medieval" style village fete - side shows and artisans, furnaces aglow producing the local variation of Cornish pasties, a bar (who needed that!) dispensing local wines, etc.

Lunch "en plein aire" watching the folk dancing, and then for many of us the highlight of the visit; to follow the throng of villagers with the ox-drawn carts and the band playing, into the vineyards of Anjou to participate in the picking of the grape which will

produce the renowned Rose d'Anjou. Truly Anjou Pur Anjou Radieux at its best.

Back to the champ de fête the grapes were emptied into the press and the juice passed round for everyone to taste. Wonderful, and on reflection we cannot remember whether the juice from the mechanical press tasted any different from the smaller one, where some pairs of well-washed (we hope) feet were taking us back a century to a life long since gone.

Was it Monday morning already? The coach again waiting and off to no not wine but a day of history and culture. Fontevraud Abbey was our first port of call and saw us wandering through centuries of history close the English heart, with the graves of our Plantagenet Kings there for us to see. The massive Abbey is undergoing a "face-lift" with lots of work going on and quite a huge area already completed. To the purists among us it was a bit too clean and clinical - more like a Hollywood backcloth to one of their epics than a building many centuries old which should be allowed (in my opinion) to show a few scars and blemishes of age.

A conducted tour of the Ecole National d'Equitation followed in the afternoon. Unfortunately September was too late to see live demonstrations but we learned a lot about saddles and the cost of residential courses! Nevertheless one left with the

impression that France is prepared to invest in facilities for National Sports and not leave it to the chance of being in the Lottery handout queue. Saumur also houses the National Tank Museum which allowed those of us still able to walk or stroll the opportunity to view and touch the demons of war; Tigers, Shermans, AMX's and the like. What a contrast to the wine and the mushrooms, not to mention the horses, for which Saumur is famous.

As they say, 'and so to bed' but not before another splendid dinner at the hotel Clos des Benedictines. Suddenly the chat turned to the journey home - 'will the sea be as rough?', 'will the plane be on time to make the connection to Inverness?', 'will the Tunnel be working?', etc. To close this résumé of our 1995 visit we wish to place on record our grateful thanks to the members of the Grand Conseil in Angers for their welcome and hospitality, both on our arrival and at the Chapitre.

Special thanks go to Michel Fleur and Patrice Monmousseau and last, but certainly not least, extra special thanks to Camile Besmiers who joined us most days and more than once got us out of a "right pickle".

We have heard since our return that the 1995 vintage will be superb, especially the reds of Saumur Champigny and Chinon, and as we helped with the picking, the Rose d'Anjou of Martigny Briand should be exceptional!



We are indebted to Roy for this sparkling account of the Visit to the centre of Saumur sparkling wine and hope that the obvious enjoyment of our delegation then will whet the appetite of more than eighteen Chevaliers and their guests to take part in next year's Visit to Anjou. The sub-committee arranging the Anjou Visits has just been re-convened to begin preparations for our next Visit which will be towards the end of September 1997.

Our links with our parent body - the Confrerie in Angers - have grown and strengthened since the Commanderie was established, initially as the British Chapter of the Order in France. Before this British candidates for membership needed wings as well as a love of Anjou wine to qualify as Chevalier Laura Garner describes.

The French Connection

Recent inductees to the Commanderie de Grande Bretagne may be interested in the events of earlier days and in the route some of us took to be inducted into the Order. It was in the late sixties that my husband, Leslie and I first attended the Grande Rallye Aerienne International des Vins, Fleurs et Chateaux D'Anjou. It seems that the ancient Order of Sacavin was revived at the first post-war International Air Rally at

Angers. After that it became an annual event.

The Rally took the form of a series of tests. As competitors we had to register our aircraft and were given a time of arrival in Angers. This was the first test and marks would be deducted for each minute early or late. Intermediate stops were allowed and we often landed at Alencon to wait for a while in order to get it right.

Another complication was that, before arriving at the aerodrome, it was necessary to fly over various chateaux in the area and note the symbols displayed on the ground - a dangerous procedure with sometimes ten aeroplanes all trying to jockey for position to see the signs!

On landing and taxiing to the parking area we were ushered into a building and tested on the qualities of Anjou wines. This was the last test and marks were added up to arrive at a Rally winner. The prizes were cups and a small sum of money but the greatest prize, given to all pilots who competed three times was that we were inducted as Chevaliers at the ceremony in the Grenier de St Jean on the first evening of the event. The grand Hall was always decorated with hydrangeas in pots and we were allowed to take one as a souvenir - not an easy thing to take home in the confined space of an aircraft cockpit.



Laura's husband, Leslie (the pilot in their aerobatic adventures to and from Angers) is also a Chevalier and, together, they are amongst the longest-serving members of the British Commanderie.

It does not always do to spend too much time thinking of the years that have passed since so many of us joined Sacavin as we are reminded by the Address printed in the Confrerie's Gazette 'Le Sacavin':

The Grand Maitre speaking

A sprightly nonagenarian, the Confrerie des Chevaliers du Sacavin is always alert to the need of keeping its objectives in mind and up to date. So the year 1995 marks another milestone in its long history.

After three years of polishing up its constitution, the Confrerie has added, in gold letters, a new and prestigious institution: The Circle of Young Chevaliers, for all those under the age of forty whose working life is closely connected with wine-growing.

Consequently, this vintage year 1995 has welcomed the induction of twenty-seven of the most prominent young wine-growers within the splendid architectural setting of the Greniers Saint Jean, that seat of culture in which resides the history of Anjou.

While Francis Bacon reminds us that -

"Youth is more fitted to invent than judge,
to execute than to counsel,
to launch more new projects than to follow the old.

However, we always managed it and some of these plants still flourish in our garden at home.

On the following day we were usually given a tour, punctuated by wine tastings and an *al fresco* lunch with more wine. After that we were expected to fly home and there were some interesting aerobatic take-offs to be seen. We decided to stay an extra night and return in safety. I am not sure for how many years this format was followed but I remember several consecutive years when the weather was bad and few if any aircraft managed to arrive. This was disappointing and expensive for the organisers and I believe led to the dropping of the aerial connection though it is still remembered in the winged hanap. We were inducted in 1971 and later joined the British Commanderie. I hope this has been an interesting insight into one facet of the History of the Commanderie.

We may also share the views of Thomas Mann, that -

"To be young is to be spontaneous, to remain close to the sources of life,
to be able to stand up and rattle the chains of an outdated civilization,
to dare to do what others have not the courage to undertake."

The conviviality which characterises the Confrerie des Chevaliers du Sacavin inspires us to throw off the gloom of daily life. So, if Alphonse de Chateaubriand could say "All is a dream in youth except hunger", remember Lord Byron's words, that "Fame is the thirst of youth". With the Circle of Young Chevaliers, let us impress on the altar of life the shared pleasure of satisfying the one and quenching the other.

OPTIME. ils sont des nôtres.

(Our thanks to Commandeur John Braun, a former Chancellor, for translating the Grand Maitre's words)

We totally agree with the Grand Maitre on the importance of attracting new young members and we echo the plea for them to come forward and join our Order. Unlike our comrades in Angers where it is customary for all engaged in wine - growers and buyers - to join Sacavin, we now have a dearth of members who, for want of a better phrase, are 'wine professionals' and it is a lack of which we become more aware as the years pass.

When the Commanderie was first set up, very distinguished practitioners in wine became Chevaliers. We still have a very distinguished membership but, unfortunately, we have lost many of our links with the growers. It is now a priority of the Management Committee to try and attract young growers to join us. Members who would like to recommend such candidates are strongly encouraged to discuss this with Chancellor Peter Bouch - by phone or fax, or write to him. See page x for address and phone numbers.

As our 25th Anniversary Chapitre commemorated, candidates to join our Order no longer need wings or some other way of travelling to Anjou to become Chevaliers. Every autumn we welcome new members as we did at the annual Induction Ceremony in November 1995.

Le Chapitre De la Vingt - quatre quinze

Held on Saturday 4th November 1995 at the Butchers' Hall in the City of London, when we elected the following distinguished candidates:

Brenda Collins - who, as the daughter of Chef de Protocole George Wilks and wife of First Halberdier Owen Collins, at last becomes a member in her own right after many years of accompanying them to our functions.

Fiona Kimm - with the emphasis on music in our ceremonies, it is good to welcome another musician to our membership for Fiona has a beautiful mezzo-soprano voice and a very distinguished career in opera.

David Cooper - is a chemist, internationally recognised as a consultant in health care and life science products and equally recognised by friends and colleagues as a very discriminating wine lover.

Emile Ludovic Mercier - who hails from Nantes and, therefore, as a true-born Angevin, now conveys his knowledge of Anjou as well as wines generally by lecturing on wine appreciation.

John Whitcutt - as a Chartered Surveyor has worked upon projects for some of the most notable companies and famous landmarks in Britain. As a lover of wine, he is now concentrating on those of our own beloved Anjou.

In addition, we welcomed to our membership, and

transferring from Hauts Normands des Goustevin:

Tina Chesterman - whose business interests is in cars but whose love is in the wines of France in which she is joined in both her commercial and personal life by her partner:

Brian Bolding - who has the commercial pilot's licence and is able to pilot both of them, now to explore the Anjou region, as Brian says 'at warp speed'.

The layout of the Butchers' Hall is so very well suited to our Induction Ceremony and Dinner. Our Officiers don their robes in the basement whilst the ordinary Chevaliers, candidates and their guests enjoy the Vin d'Honneur, just above them in the main reception room enhanced by the splendid glass frieze separating them from the entrance foyer. It is then a case of continuing ever upwards with the Induction Ceremony in the muted splendour of the Council Chamber on the floor above until Dinner is served in the magnificent splendour of the Dining Hall on the top floor - only Heaven remains above! This Chapitre was the first at which Derek Sheen had officiated as Grand Commandeur with this Inaugural Address to his fellow Chevaliers and their guests.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, my fellow Chevaliers. It is with great pleasure that I welcome you this evening having already participated in the Quatre-Vingt Quinze Chapitre. We welcome, not only the new Inductees this evening, but also many of those at

whose induction in Angers we were present some five weeks ago.

You know this is a very special occasion for me as it marks the first time I have had the honour of officiating as your Grand Commandeur, and the fact that amongst the distinguished group of Inductees, included are two very good friends of mine, Brenda Collins and John Whitcutt.

The A.G.M. earlier this year was a sad occasion as it marked the retirement of Grand Commandeur Chris Wilkinson. Chris had held the office with distinction for six years, having previously served over many years as Chancellor and Senechal. Chris brought with him a very mature knowledge of wine, accumulated over years of experience in the wine trade. Those of us that attended the happy tastings and luncheons at Chough Cottage, Towersey, will long remember them.

Our summer event this year was a tasting and luncheon at Mere in Somerset. Robin Yapp, a fellow Chevalier, presented a comprehensive tasting of fine Loire wines and a luncheon followed at the local hostelry, the Old Ship.

The major event this year was our biennial visit to the Loire Valley and it was generally agreed that this was one of the best ever . . .

. . . One must pay a very genuine tribute to our parent Confrerie in Angers for the warmth of their welcome and the supreme efforts made by Grand Maitre Pierre Gate, Michel Fleur and Camille Besmiers. For us it was a most happy stay in France and the opportunity to spend a break with old and new friends was a great pleasure. Our warm thanks go to all those who were responsible for making this visit such a success. . . .



Returning to venues that have served us well has become policy for the Management Committee because our standards and requirements are assured. This was also true for this year's Annual General Meeting when the Bleeding Heart Restaurant at Bleeding Heart Yard, London EC1 again proved a popular choice of venue on Saturday 23rd March. Almost fifty Chevaliers and their guests attended the AGM where members adopted the various Reports and elected the Management Committee for 1996/97 as follows:

Senechal
Tresorier
Delegue-General
Ecuyer
Chancelier
Chef de Protocole

Roy Clements
Robert Wills
Frank Coe
Raymond Harris
Peter Bouch
George Wilks

. . . Next I should like to turn to the question of membership. You know every year, extraordinarily, we lose members who do not renew their subscription, and it is therefore essential that we are constantly looking for new Inductees, and your help in this is of utmost importance. Additionally this year, we are to lose two Committee members who propose to resign after long service and wish to make way for new blood. If you would like to serve and bring new ideas to our deliberations we should be delighted to hear from you.

Finally, I know you would wish me, on behalf of us all, to thank Chef de Cuisine Newton Grant who was responsible for this evening's arrangements, Chancellor Frank Coe for his wine selection and presentation and all those who have contributed to the success of this evening. Perhaps a special mention for George Wilks for his work on the seating arrangements and the artistic table plan which he so superbly presents.

I leave you with a quotation. The reason we are all here this evening stems from an interest and love of wine. "Wine is one of the most civilised things in the world and one of the natural things of the world that has been brought to the greatest perfection. It offers a greater range for enjoyment and appreciation than, possibly, any other purely sensory thing".

This is the third Chapitre of the Commanderie for which the Butchers' Hall has been the venue and it has proved so popular that this year's Induction Ceremony and Dinner - **Le Chapitre du Boeuf Ecossais** - will again, be held there so please mark the date in your diaries now. Saturday 16th November 1996.

Chef des Beaux Arts
Chef de Cuisine
Chef d'Historiographie
1st Halberdier
2nd Halberdier
Leonard Salzedo
Newton Grant
Pat Salzedo
Owen Collins
Tony Morris

It should be noted that the Grand Commandeur - Derek Sheen - is appointed by the Grand Conseil in France.

In order that members, generally, are made familiar with the responsibilities of the Officers elected at the AGM and, perhaps to emphasise that they are no more onerous than generally associated with serving on a committee in case this might encourage them to come forward, we include a description of these by the Grand Commandeur:

COMMANDEUR (President)

Appointed by the grand Council in France. presides at the major functions of the Commanderie, including the Annual Chapitre (induction dinner), the Annual General Meeting and Chairs the Committee of Management meetings when present. Processes after the Senechal carrying the winestock with which he dubs the candidates in the ceremony.

All the following officers are members of the Committee of Management, are elected at each Annual General Meeting by the Members of the British Commanderie and are eligible for re-election. The Committee of Management which conducts the affairs of the Commanderie meets four or five times a year, usually in London.

SENECHAL (Vice President)

Deputy Commandeur. In the induction ceremony procession the Senechal carries the Rebelais portrait and follows the Chef de Protocol preceding the Grand Commandeur. In the ceremony he places the collarette around the neck of the newly inducted candidate.

DELEGUE-GENERAL (Deputy)

Deputy to Senechal. Processes immediately behind the Grand Commandeur and takes over the Senechal's duties when appropriate.

ECUYER (Assistant Deputy)

Assistant to Delege General. Processes after the Delege General and carries the tablet (the crest of the Commanderie). In the ceremony the Ecuyer hands a scroll to each newly inducted candidate.

At the present time the holder of this office, (Frank Coe), having previously been Chancellor, has retained his responsibility for the Commanderie's wine).

CHANCELIER (Secretary)

Officially secretary to the Commanderie, but until

recently these duties have been performed by the Chef d'Historiographie. By tradition the Chancellor has also been responsible for the ordering, handling, use, storage of and, above all, commenting on the wines at functions. In the procession the Chancellor follows the Ecuyer and carries the Golden Book (record of Inductions) and quill. After the ceremony he requires the inducted candidates to sign the book.

TRESORIER (Treasurer)

Responsible for the financial affairs and records of the Commanderie. Processes after the Chancellor and carries the framed oath which, during the ceremony, he holds in front of the reading candidates

CHEF DE PROTOCOL (Master of Ceremonies)

Responsible for the procedural conduct of the induction and also acts as Master of Ceremonies at dinners and functions. Leads the induction procession, carrying the wand and thereafter instructs the candidates through the procedures. Each Inductee is the subject of a brief citation which is usually prepared by the member responsible for his/her introduction. The Chef de Protocol collects these and is responsible for any editing where necessary.

CHEF DES BEAUX ARTS (Master of Entertainment)

Organises any entertainment or accompaniment required at ceremonies or functions. Also responsible for the deployment of trumpeters at the induction. Carries the collarettes in the procession and passes them to the Senechal in the ceremony.

CHEF DE CUISINE (Master of Catering)

Responsible for bookings and making the catering arrangements for the Commanderie's functions. Processes after the Tresorier and carries the Hanap. The Hanap is a silver replica of the traditional glass of the Anjou region and the Inductees are required to place the right hand over it whilst reading the oath.

CHEF d'HISTORIOGRAPHE (Recorder)

The Commanderie's official recorder of events and editor of the regular issues of the chronicle "Sacavin Courier". In the procession carries the scrolls which she/he passes to the Ecuyer during the ceremony.

1ST AND 2ND HALBERDIERS (Symbolic Guards)

Usually positions held by the newcomers on the Committee of Management. In the procession, carrying their halberds, they protect the Grand Commandeur.

Sacavin Savages or Savage Sacavins?

A warm welcome to new Management Committee Member, Tony Morris as 2nd Halberdier, is also a reminder that, in the most commendable way possible and, initially mainly by chance, a small sub-group has formed within the Commanderie of those of our members who are also Brother-Savages - for the uninitiated, members of the Savage Club.

Tony shares this distinction with three others within the Management Committee - Ecuyer Raymond Harris, Chef de Cuisine Newton Grant, and Chef des Beaux Arts Leonard Salzedo; one of our Founding Fathers - John Braun - a new Inductee David Cooper are among other 'Savage' members in our midst.

Unlike our Order, Savage Club membership is restricted to males. Similar to our Order, members are drawn from the fields of literature, the law, the visual arts, the theatre, music and science although we also include other disciplines. In common with our Order, both memberships have the highest possible appreciation of good wine and good food. As proof of our shared ground, 2nd Halberdier Tony Morris organised a highly successful Summer Wine Tasting and Luncheon at his home in Lower Froyle, Hampshire on Saturday 15th June, with the sun beaming munificently upon the thirty-five Sacavin and guests. A full account will be included in the next edition.

Legal Elevation of Chevalier

Before leaving thoughts of our Savage Club Sacavins, let us congratulate another member we share - Chevalier Martin Reynolds - upon being made a Judge.

OBITUARY

It is always a sad duty to report the passing of a Chevalier and it was with great regret we learned from our former Grand Commandeur Chris Wilkinson, of the death of his father **Lt Col Frederick Wilkinson, TD**, just a month short of his 92nd birthday. Lt Col Wilkinson was a very early member of the Commanderie, being Inducted as Chevalier in 1970.

His death deprives our Order of the fairly unusual distinction we enjoyed for a few years of having three generations of Wilkinsons as members - Lt Col Wilkinson, his son Chris, and Chris' son Robert.

It is always a sad duty to record the passing of good, old friends and true, and in no way is this more so than in our mourning the death of **Florence Wilks** - 'Flo' to her family and friends - the wife of our beloved Chef de Protocole George Wilks.

The ill-health of recent years had prevented Flo from accompanying George to our events but, for those of us whose memories go back a good few years, George and Florence could always be found at every Sacavin event - she as much, if not more, than he - savouring the good food and good wine. Nothing fancy, she would say, just good, plain enjoyment.

We extend our deepest sympathy to George, Brenda, Owen, Peter and all the family upon their loss, but feel sure they would agree with us it was a privilege to have known such a grand lady.

New Address for Secretariat

Since the AGM the new Chancellor is undertaking the duties of the secretariate. Members with queries regarding membership; changes of address; details of events, etc., should now contact Peter Bouch at,

6 Mill Paddock, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 5EU: **Telephone:** 01235 520143 **Fax:** 01235 554979

Ninety Not Out!

It was one of life's unwelcome ironies that Florence Wilks died just before George's ninetieth birthday. So near, in fact, that he questioned whether the planned birthday party should go ahead, but the views of the family prevailed and George celebrated his ninety years on Saturday 29th June in the midst of his family and friends - a large contingent of Sacavin members making up the latter - at Brenda and Owen's home in Brightlingsea. Weather-wise conditions could not have been worse - the rain poured down, the wind howled so that the tarpaulin put up to protect the guests almost took off with the house - but the warmth of the occasion more than compensated - perhaps stimulated by George's increasing expansiveness as he unwrapped yet more bottles of vintage wine!

On behalf of all Sacavin we congratulate George on not just such a good score but one achieved by so many sterling moves and quality approaches. Dare we advise him to keep steady at the crease - as Geoff Boycott might say - and aim for a century!

Have You Paid Your Subscription?

Members will recall that last year's increase in the subscription coincided with a change of bank necessitating a change of bankers' orders as the majority of Chevaliers use this method of meeting their annual dues. Queries and accidental omissions inevitably accompany such changes and the Treasurer is concerned that some members may have inadvertently not renewed. If you think you are among these, please contact the Treasurer:

Robert Wills, 14 West Meads Onslow Village Guildford Surrey Guildford GU2 5ST: Telephone 01206 303418
Please note, the current subscription is £10 per annum, £15 including 'spouse rate'.