



SUMMER 2022

CHAÎNE DES RÔTISSEURS
BAILLIAGE DE GRANDE BRETAGNE

table talk

For the Love of Fine Dining

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Young Sommeliers and Young Chefs Competitions

NEW APPOINTMENTS

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ON THE GRILL

With James Hiley-Jones, Managing Director of Greenclose Hotels

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In this issue...

Young Professionals Awards Event at Harrods Social



Once again aspiring young professionals proved themselves winners in this year's National Competitions. Once again young chefs faced the challenge of The Mystery Box and young sommeliers the trial of Blind Tasting and truly deserved the awards they received at a special event at Harrods Social. Once again our congratulations to all who took part in these challenging competitions.

On The Grill – James Hiley-Jones, Managing Director of Greenclose Hotels



Who knows where accepting challenges and taking up opportunities can take you in the hospitality industry. James Hiley-Jones is probably better placed than most to advise on building a long and satisfying career, as revealed in his 'grilling' by Fiona Campbell... from somewhere deep in the heart of the New Forest.

Albury Vineyard – organic and biodynamic



Nick Wenman had always had a dream. When he retired from the IT industry he took up the challenge and set out to fulfil it. Family-run Albury Vineyard in the North Downs is the fulfilment of his ambitious dream. Both organic and biodynamic, it produces award-winning English wines, a still rosé and a range of sparkling wines. Wines, as you will read, fit for a Queen.

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ChaîneGB



@ChaîneGB

If you would like to promote a Bailliage event, or you have any news or photos you would like posted on the Chaîne Facebook page, email them, together with a brief outline, to the online editor Majorie Vestergaard at online-editor@chaîne.co.uk

Photographs of events are now available on www.photos.chaine.co.uk

To follow the Chaîne news online internationally, visit www.chainedesrotisseurs.com/news_online

Dear members and friends



It is a pleasure writing to you now the Chaîne's activities are back to normal and we are all able to meet friends and colleagues again. Make the most of the great programmes of events that Baillages across the country have arranged.

This year we have been able again to run two great competitions for our young

professionals. These culminated in an Awards Lunch a couple of months ago. I would like to express my thanks to the team at Harrods for facilitating this event. Our Young Chef goes to Mexico City and our Young Sommelier to Wiesbaden to compete in the respective international finals later this year.

I am delighted to announce three new appointments as Regional Bailli, effective 1 October: Gill Kendall in Yorkshire, Jackie Horsfield in Cotswolds and Tim Moore in Sussex. More details later in this issue (p21).

In a real improvement to our processes, our membership management has now gone online and if you have prospective

new members, forms are no longer required as the system is completely interactive. Just let your Bailli know the email address of the prospect you wish to nominate, and they can take it from there.

We are all dismayed at the situation in Ukraine and will surely wish to help in some way. Perhaps not directly or by taking refugees into our homes, but may I encourage those of you who wish to support Ukraine to do so through donations to the Disasters Emergency Committee or Red Cross.

Let me wish you all a great summer. I look forward to seeing many of you at the Grand Chapitre in Oxford in September for what will be an outstanding weekend.

Vive la Chaîne!

Philip

Bailli Délégué
Membre du Conseil Magistral

Camaraderie *on camera*

Send your favourite picture to
Janet Epton, editor@chaine.co.uk



Janet Evins and Christine Maxwell



Jose Sol



Moira Brown and Christina Yeardley



Edwina and Iain Morris



Irene Burlinson and Chris James



Julian White and Gerard O'Shea



Kim Finch and Robbie Nicholson



Kenneth & Penny Lamb, Anna Horsfield and Jackie & Andrew Horsfield



Richard & Christine Maxwell



Julia & David Edwards



Mike Monahan and Philip Evins



Chris Moore



Moira Brown, Dominic & Christina Yeardley and Peter Brown



Leslie Cuthbert & Susan Bradford



Diana Wang & Peter George



Alison Mew Oades & Kevin Oades

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL AWARDS – A STELLAR OCCASION AT HARRODS



Liam Rogers, Magdalena Babik and Freddie Johnson

Three new rising stars of the hospitality world were unveiled in May at the Young Professional Awards, held at the recently opened Harrods Social by Jason Atherton. Over 60 guests joined the three chefs and three sommeliers, first with Harrods Grand Cru Champagne, before sitting to a faultless lunch to celebrate their achievements.

Liam Rogers, 25, of Gleneagles in Scotland and a former 'MasterChef – The Professionals' finalist, was crowned Young Chef of the Year. He goes forward to compete in the World Championships in Mexico at the beginning of October.

In the sommelier contest, Freddie Johnson, also 25, from the Fat Duck, Bray won the coveted Young Sommelier of the Year title. He will represent Great Britain against the rest of the world this September in Wiesbaden, Germany. The best palate in the competition – Polish Magdalena Babik, 22, and currently at Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons – was awarded the Gerard Basset Trophy. Both Freddie and Magdalena were competing in their first-ever competitions.



In summing up the event Philip Evins, BD, commented: 'It just goes to show what superb young talent we have in the industry now, and we are proud to be nurturing these embryonic and promising careers. The Chaîne congratulates these worthy winners. We will certainly see more of them, I am sure.'

Warrington-born Liam Rogers beat two young chefs from Grantley Hall in North Yorkshire – runner up Daniel Parker and highly commended Thomas Wyper. Cooking in the Knorr kitchens in Leatherhead, all the chef finalists were asked to create and execute a three-course meal for four in three hours, from a 'surprise' box of ingredients. Liam's winning menu comprised lemon sole with brown shrimp butter; poached ballotine of chicken with chorizo; and a rhubarb dessert with crème fraîche, tarragon, and a sable biscuit. Our thanks, as always, to Unilever who allowed us to use their Development Kitchens in Leatherhead for the competition.

'A mystery box is always tough, but I think my experience on Master Chef certainly taught me to hold my nerve and keep cool under pressure' commented Liam. 'I was definitely focussed.' That focus has been there all his life. 'I've always wanted to be a chef, right from an early age,' he explains. Liam's father owned a restaurant in Warrington, and young Liam helped out in the kitchens from the age of 12. 'It was the only way I got to see my Dad, apart from Sundays!' he laughs, 'but that got me hooked.'

After catering college, Liam spent some time at Restaurant Andrew Fairlie at Gleneagles, and then moved to Sat Bains in Nottingham. It was there that he was encouraged to enter Master Chef. 'I got to the last three in the Finals – it was amazing. I was only 24, and the youngest chef in the competition from the quarter finals onwards.'

Late last year, Liam returned to Gleneagles, this time as sous chef in the Strathearn restaurant. When he heard about the Chaîne's

'It just goes to show what superb young talent we have in the industry now, and we are proud to be nurturing these embryonic and promising careers'

competition and the chance to go to Mexico, he signed up immediately. 'I am so excited. It's a place I have always wanted to visit. Now, after three competitions, I have finally come back with a W for Win! My Dad was the first person I texted with the news.'



Jose Sol, Cherish Finden and Ben Purton



Young Sommelier of the Year, Freddie Johnson from Fulham was also thrilled to win. 'I am delighted – and quite surprised as this was the first competition I have ever entered.' He beat off stiff competition in the exacting theory and practical sommelier's final, held recently at the Double Tree Hilton, Kensington, where Magdalena Babik from Le Manoir came second, and Ryan Duffy of Andrew Fairlie at Gleneagles took third place.

Freddie jokes that he is a failed chef, and a failed academic – then he discovered wine! 'Nothing really grabbed me at school, but I did have a passion for food and wine.' So, he went to Tante Marie in Woking, graduated and joined the brigade at Trinity in Clapham. But he never forgot a short course on wine given by John Downes MW. 'It really appealed', he recalls. 'I like accruing information. I suppose I am a bit of a nerd!' So, he moved to the fledgling Vagabond Wines, and realised he wanted to take wine seriously. Plumpton College and a degree in wine and business studies followed, and then Phil Howard snapped him up for his Church Road restaurant. During lockdown, with little time 'on the floor', young Freddie took over the wine list... growing it to 120 listings.

'However, after a year, I knew I needed more experience, and to learn from the best,' he explained. Freddie signed on at The Fat Duck, where he is now one of eight in the sommelier team, working with sommeliers from all over Europe. 'It's quite a learning curve, but I am proud of what I have achieved already. I suppose you could call me a rough diamond, now being polished!'

While these young stars were being feted, the lucky guests at Harrods Social – part of a new fine wine and dining complex on the famous store's lower ground floor – were treated to a highly-memorable lunch created by Michelin starred chef Jason Atherton, of Pollen Street Social fame. His sous chefs, Michalis Kashis and Saveria Maschio, run the kitchen at Harrods where the brigade presented a three-course meal full of skill. Seared tuna, avocado purée, radish and ponzu was followed by cob chicken, braised mushrooms, truffle mash potato, leeks, and Madeira sauce, and a simple, but unforgettable, Olive Oil cake... with a difference. All accompanied by wines chosen by David Funes, the Restaurant Manager: Domaine Vacheron Sancerre Les Romaines, Domaine



Philip Evins, Andy Kemp, Magdalena Babik, Lesley Cuthbert, Gareth Ferreira and Matteo Montone

Odoul-Coquard Nuits-St George, and a Riesling Ice Wine from the Peller Estates in the Niagara Peninsula.

'It was a great pleasure to be able to hold the Awards at Harrods Social, thanks to Ben Purton, our Conseiller Culinare, who is also the Operations Manager for the Harrods restaurants,' commented Philip Evins as he presented Ben and the team with the Chaîne's Award of Excellence in recognition of their efforts. 'Our lunch was superb, and the wine pairings perfect.'

And now two of our rising stars, the Young Chef and the Young Sommelier of 2022 start their preparations for the Chaîne's International Finals in the autumn, ably coached by their mentors and judges.

Good luck Liam and Freddie. We wish you every success.

Fiona Campbell



David Funes accepting an Award for Excellence

CHAÎNE GANG DRINKS WHISKY

For as long as any citizen of Edinburgh can remember, two iconic buildings have stood at the west end of Princes Street – the Caledonian Hotel looming opposite House of Fraser. But Frasers, like other Princes Street emporia, is now a departed store. Today the building hosts 'Johnnie Walker Princes Street' an outfit that aims to tell the story of its eponymous founder, explain the alchemy of scotch whisky, and sell food, drink and souvenirs. Supremo Sheila decided to check it out.

The advertising promises 'an immersive experience' and the type of Chaîne Ecosse member who imagined that might involve swimming in whisky, duly turned up – together with equally gullible visitors Takashi Suzuki and Andrew Gosling. Somewhat disappointed, we were led from floor to floor to view a series of tableaux illustrating the firm's history and all you need to know about whisky. Sounds not too interesting if, like your scribe, one has spent a lifetime drinking whisky, but all was done very well with lots of special effects and further explanation delivered with élan and a deal of bounding around, by personable quines. An amusing episode involved each visitor preparing and drinking a unique dram from a selection of grain and malt whiskies – a blending exercise which naturally produced mixed results. Then to the rooftop restaurant where we gawped at long views to east, south and west before sitting down in a private corner room for a lunch amical of excellent food and wine.

William Bruce

CHILTERN'S BAILLIAGE SABRAGE-BEFORE-DINNER AT DANESFIELD HOUSE

The weather fantastic and 36 of us enjoying a lovely Summer evening. The Sabrage was held on the terrace at Danesfield House, just outside Marlow, overlooking the Chilterns countryside. Julian White and Ajay Nehra from the Confrérie du Sabre d'Or and both Chaîne members oversaw the Sabrage with great style and organisation. Over twenty of us took part in the Sabrage so we obviously had to drink a lot of Champagne!

The evening gave us the chance to present Silver Commandeur Awards to Tony and Helen Wernham, both founding members of Chilterns and our Bureau. It is great to be able make such awards when you have a full house.

Danesfield House did very well with the menu and matching the wines, and the service was superb. We would like to thank Alex Robertson the GM and a member of Chilterns for the great hospitality. What a magnificent event!

Barney Quinn



SOUTH WEST at The Angel, Dartmouth

It was a perfect sunny day on the bank of the River Dart in Dartmouth for a Spring Lunch at The Angel. The Angel was first named The Carved Angel and owned by Joyce Molyneux in 1974 when she became one of the first women in the UK to gain the prestigious Michelin Star for the restaurant. This accolade was based upon the premise of serving high quality, modern British food, using only the finest local ingredients.

Elly Wentworth continues to deliver Joyces's mission. Elly was finalist in Master Chef, The Professionals in 2018, and has since represented the South West on the TV programme 'Great British Menu' during the past two years.

With a delightful glass of local sparkling Calancombe Blanc De Noir 2019, we enjoyed two delicious canapés: polenta cake with a wild garlic cream and a tomato and hazelnut crisp. With views out over the River Dart this made a captivating start to a great lunch!

The first course, set in a beautiful, locally made shell-like dish, really fired up the test buds with beetroot tart, poppyseed curd relish and sorrel. Such a great combination served with a Villa di Petrognano, Pomino 2017, an earth red from Tuscany.

You cannot come to Dartmouth or indeed to Devon and not feast on local crab. Our next course, a crab risotto, was certainly full of flavour, lifted with preserved lemon and sea purslane. A rich, creamy, perfectly cooked dish, matched with a chilled Alvarinho Reserva.

What could be better when by the sea?

The main course of Spring Lamb Rump, with apricot, barbequed leek, thyme & lamb jus was, again, beautifully presented.

Served just pink and paired with a glass of Babylonstoren Shiraz – the wine perfectly complimenting the dish with its notes of cherries and spice. Delicious!

There was just enough room left for dessert. Devonshire clotted cream, (of course!) with golden raisin, sesame and apple was paired with a chilled Château Laville, sauternes 2015, making a great finish.

After coffee, petit fours, the Santé and a lovely speech from Elly, it was time for that well-earned walk along the river and out to Dartmouth Castle. All stunning!

Mark Godfrey



The Clifton Club in Bristol was the venue for a spring luncheon for members and guests of the Cotswolds Bailliage. Founded in 1818, The Clifton Club is Bristol's premier private members club. It is set within a glorious Georgian building in the heart of Clifton Village and has a fine reputation for the quality of its food and wine.

Friends and guests chatted and enjoyed a glass of Jansz Premium Cuvée and some delicious canapés before the business of the AGM. That concluded, lunch began with a delightfully presented smoked salmon and trout compression, fermented fennel and dill crumbs which was accompanied by a Bees Knees Chenin Blanc Viognier, South Africa, 2021. Beautifully cooked guinea fowl followed,

served with asparagus, chicory, potato compression and red wine sauce which was matched with Chateau Trébiac Graves, France 2017.

The truly scrumptious dessert of dark chocolate, caramelised white chocolate dome, with raspberries and chocolate sorbet was perfectly accompanied by a Petit Guiraud, Sauternes, France 2013.

Richard Maxwell had kindly arranged the luncheon. He introduced Head Chef Philip Clench who had devised the delicious menu. The Santé du Chef was proposed by Bailli Alan Cox and all agreed that it had been an excellent and thoroughly enjoyable springtime event.

Joanne Cook



Yvonne Thomas became CEO of The Clink Charity in January of this year. Having spent her career in public and private sector organisations including BT, the Ministry of Justice and Interserve, latterly Yvonne has been advising organisations including charities and community interest companies, particularly those who help find people good jobs and decent accommodation. Much of her career has been spent trying to find ways to support people in their rehabilitation journey. She is also a trustee of the national charity P3 – 'People, Potential, Possibilities'.

The Clink Charity and Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service are extending the Clink Kitchens programme to deliver training in up to 70 prisons across England and Wales over the next three years. This will enable up to 2,000 men and women in prisons to achieve City & Guilds NVQ qualifications in hospitality and gain employment upon release. Research indicates that prisoners who have participated in the scheme are 32% less likely to reoffend, and the professionally trained Clink graduates are considered a credible solution to the hospitality industry skills shortage created by Brexit and the Covid pandemic. The plan is to have the Clink Kitchens training up and running in over 50 prisons by the end of 2022. The Chaîne continues to support these efforts.



Finally, three years from its inception, a group from Chilterns Bailliage, plus two honorary Chiltonians from Yorkshire and two from Wessex, enjoyed a wine and food tour of Rioja and San Sebastian, in Spain. As you all know these trips always have some real time challenges, so using Grape Escapes to organise things for us proved to be a wise choice.

A few of us hit Bilbao on the first night with an impromptu dinner and a glass or two, before formally starting the tour on the Monday when we went to Haro in the centre of Rioja. We stayed at The Hotel Los Agustinos, a converted monastery and prison. Yes, really! It is an exceptional hotel and they put on a first-class welcome dinner for us. We then started on our winery visits. There were many, including

Lopez de Heredia, Bodegas Tobelos and CVNE, to name but a few. We had an exceptional local guide, Itziar (Itzy) Calleja who added terrific value to the tour, especially with a Tapas bar 'run' in Logrono. She also hosted a picnic with wines from her own winery!

We moved on to San Sebastian where we stayed right on the beach at The Hotel De Londres y de Inglaterra. 'Location, Location, Location' with a great bar too! Apart from walking, and swimming in the sea, we dined in multiple Michelin restaurants in the evenings including Kokotxa and Rekondo and, during the day, at various Tapas bars. We had another organised Tapas bar visit which was fantastic. If asked to pick a favourite, it would be the restaurant Amelia by Paulo Airaud. Paulo has worked at Danesfield House and the Fat Duck, both professional members of Chilterns. It was some night.

After a busy four days, needing rest and recovery, we made for home!

Barney Quinn



DINNER AT CASSONS RESTAURANT

Chichester



'A splendid launching for the new Bailli!'



A six course, tasting menu was on offer for this evening, the first of Solent's 2022 programme. Cassons in Tangmere has long been a feature of the West Sussex dining scene and Cassons and their fare proved to be extremely popular with a full turnout for this event – John Wigg's first as the new Bailli of Solent.

Canapés of digestive, goat cheese and Parma ham were presented together with a glass of Brut Blanc Touraine Paris Simoneau (NV) France before a delicious terrine of goose livers, apple, and celeriac started the dinner. This was served with a Sauternes Raymond Lofan (2007) France.

A fine white Burgundy, Macon Lugny Louis Latour (2020) offered a peachy counterpoint to an interesting platter – 'chaud-froid' – of fresh and smoked salmon: a crumbed ball of cooked fish with goujons of smoked salmon side-by-side and accompanied by cucumber, leek and jus.

If there is a Main in a tasting menu, this was it! Slow-cooked beef short ribs with caramelised Jerusalem artichoke purée,

roskoff onions, marrow fat potatoes, pickled red cabbage, crisp kale, all served with a dark, strongly flavoured jus. A collection of textures and flavours bursting forth to complement each other and brilliantly added to by the Black Shiraz Berton Vineyards (2018) from Australia.

A 'Mojito' Sorbet palate cleanser was perfect before moving on to the sweeter tastes to come.

First a Stilton full of character with a pear tarte tatin. A popular combination of flavours which always pleases. Then a final flourish – a ménage of lime curd, meringue, blackcurrant, and pecan crumb – all piquant and sweet and served with a Black Muscat Elysium (2016) USA.

This splendid menu of contrasting and delicious flavours deserved all the warm congratulations given to the Chef, kitchen, and front of house staff. A splendid launching, too, for the new Bailli!

Neil Deverill

COTWOLDS RAISE A ROYAL TOAST FOR THE PLATINUM JUBILEE



A Cotswolds Special Jubilee lunch was held in June at Homewood Hotel near Bath. A lovely sunny day meant the reception was held in the beautiful gardens. Varied canapés and a Taittinger Rosé champagne cocktail with gin and raspberries were served. Afterwards we were shown the extensive no dig vegetable area with an interesting talk by the gardener.

We moved into a private dining room where we were served the first course of asparagus, balsamic figs, truffle almond, and goat's cheese finished with honey. The crisp Vermentino wine pairing was highly rated. The main course of lamb shank with olives, jersey royals,

pickled shallot, radish and dill was light enough for the hot day, and the natural Beaujolais made easy drinking.

The Bailli, Alan Cox, proposed the royal toast to Her Majesty with Taittinger Rosé Champagne which was met with great acclaim.

The meal finished with a dessert of champagne jelly with strawberry trifle, followed by coffee and chocolates. The Executive Chef James Forman was thanked for his excellent meal and it was clear that members and their guests enjoyed this special Jubilee occasion.

Alan Cox

WHERE SMUGGLERS TROD...



Julia & Lawrence Murphy

The old harbour at Emsworth was perfect. Fishermans' cottages run almost to the harbour wall, their linked cellars and passageways ideal for 17th century smugglers to disappear into the dark of the night.

The Solent Baillie's Spring lunch was held in just one of those cottages. Fat Olives restaurant, whose cellar was originally a favourite haunt of such smugglers and other unsavoury vagabonds, was our Spring lunch venue. Nowadays the charm of this small and intimate restaurant is its relaxed and informal atmosphere and friendly attentive service. And there was certainly nothing unsavoury about the wonderful lunch served to Solent members and guests.

On arrival fat olives (of course!) accompanied local wine maker Raimes 2018 single estate Blanc de Noir from South Downs, Hampshire. The first course of delicious and outstandingly presented home-cured local chalk stream trout, with beetroot and horseradish dressing, was accompanied by a very fine Macon Vire Clesse 2019, Domaine Chanson, Burgundy. Confit of the famous Creedy carver duck was cleverly paired with a cassoulet of Hodmedods Red Fox carlin peas with roasted parsnips – all served with Mount Edward 'Ted' Pinot Noir 2020, Central Otago, New Zealand. A truly sensational, baked chocolate mousse with orange and ginger sorbet, partnered with chilled Taylors 10-year-old tawny port, completed a truly magnificent lunch.

We had asked our hosts, Julia and Lawrence Murphy, to 'really look after us and pull out all the stops'. They certainly did – and some. We shall return again to this Solent favourite.

John Wigg

YORKSHIRE ROARS INTO 2022 AT GRANTLEY HALL



Gill Kendall

A celebration of the Chinese New Year of the Tiger kicked off the year's events for the Yorkshire Baillieage at Grantley Hall. Their Eighty Eight Restaurant is located just across from the Hall, in the Garden Pavilion next to the English Heritage listed Japanese garden, and the Pan Asian themed cuisine brings a taste of Asia to Yorkshire.

Head Chef, Shane Zhao, is passionate about discovering great ingredients and embracing the food culture from different regions. With both Australian and Chinese heritage, Shane began her culinary career in 2009 at Melbourne's Wafu Japanese restaurant. Now in the north of England, she takes great pride in creating inspiring dishes that combine the flavours of Asia with the best produce of Yorkshire.

The evening commenced with members and guests gathering in the bar and chatting over a glass of Champagne. We were greeted at the table by Acting Bailli, Gill Kendall who honoured the Chinese tradition of cleaning their homes to make way for incoming good luck for the new year. In our case this consisted of Gill

symbolically sweeping the restaurant floor.

We enjoyed an outstanding eight course tasting menu with accompanying wines including sake. The Tataki of Dry Aged Yorkshire Beef with truffle ponzu, charred spring onion, shiso leaves and summer truffle was a particular favourite along with the perfectly cooked BBQ Yorkshire duck breast, with a 5 spice, spring roll, pad choy, preserved cherries and spice sauce.

During the evening we were further entertained by the Tengu Taiko Drummers whose wonderful and exhilarating performance demonstrated both traditional Japanese and contemporary drumming. Of course, you can't have a Chinese celebration without a dragon too, which was a wonderful climax to the entertainment.

At the end of this roaringly convivial evening, we were pleased to congratulate the Chef and all the staff in time-honoured Chaîne fashion.

Christina Yeardley

MICHELIN STAR CUISINE at The Shaun Rankin, Grantley Hall

On a beautiful spring evening the Yorkshire Baillieage returned to the 'Jewel in the Yorkshire Crown', Grantley Hall, a Relais and Chateaux hotel nestled in the heart of Yorkshire Dales. This time it was for dinner at The Shaun Rankin Restaurant.

Shaun spent his early years growing up in North Yorkshire and left when he was 16 years of age to pursue a career in culinary arts. During his starry career, Shaun has been awarded a Michelin star in multiple kitchens and, returning home to Yorkshire, has now achieved another Michelin star.

At Grantley Hall, The Shaun Rankin takes advantage of the herbs and vegetables grown in the hotel's very own Kitchen Garden and offers quality organic meat from nearby farms, speciality cheeses from across the country and fresh seafood from the nearby Yorkshire coast.

Dinner was set beautifully in a private room with oak panelling and sparkling chandeliers.

Welcomed personally by Shaun, we were invited to enjoy a seven-course dinner entitled 'Taste of Home'. Highlights included the langoustine, elderflower and smoked cream which was served with a 2019 Chasselas, Henri Badoux, Vaud, and the venison loin, with blackcurrant and celery, accompanied by a superb 2012 Chateau Paveil de Luze Margaux. One of the desserts – parsnip, pear and pineapple weed – was an absolute triumph and a fabulous combination with the 2018 Ice Wine, Cabernet Franc, VQA Niagara Peninsula.

After dinner we were thrilled to welcome Shaun and his team into the dining room. Philip proposed the Santé du Chef et du Service and the assembled team was fully deserving of the profuse thanks. Another outstanding event at Grantley Hall.

Christina Yeardley

Discovering the joys of Sicily...



In Spring, a group of 40 GB members (plus a couple of antipodeans from Canberra) landed in Catania, Sicily. Our mission was to discover why so many have invaded Sicily, and to uncover the joys of an island rich in history and culture.



In Spring, a group of 40 GB members (plus a couple of antipodeans from Canberra) landed in Catania, Sicily. Our mission was to discover why so many have invaded Sicily, and to uncover the joys of an island rich in history and culture.

The trip began in Taormina, a beautiful city perched on a cliff at the foot of the mighty volcano, 'Mama Etna', and our introduction to Sicily's very visible history of nation conquerors, including the Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, French and Spanish.

Our hotel was idyllically perched on a rocky promontory about 200 metres high above the bay with views of Mt Etna. We were treated to a nightly display of volcanic activity and could clearly see the glowing lava flows. In the morning we left from the popular seaside resort of Giardini Naxos in 3 boats to explore the Isola Bella and blue grotto. That evening we dined at Morena d'Agostino's Kiste in the centre of the old town. The restaurant is in a 700-year-old building listed as a national monument, and we dined in the courtyard.



Alessio Planeta

The next day, we set off up the northern slopes of Mount Etna for visits to two vineyards. First to Donnafugata at Randazzo. Here, at between 730 metres and 750 metres above sea level in lava soils from traditional 'bush trained' vines, we tasted wines made from Carricante, Nerello Mascalese and Zibbibo. We climbed another 50 metres to Planeta's Etna vineyard, Sciaranuova, where the vines are planted in terraces cut into Etna's face. The 1614 range is named after the eruption of 1614, the longest ever recorded, which halted right on the border of these vineyards, forming their shape. Under a wonderful pergola we enjoyed a rustic lunch... and the wine flowed.

Dinner that evening was at the one starred Michelin restaurant – La Capinera – right on the beach. Under the baton of Maître Rôtisseur Pietro D'Agostino, the menu highlighted the bounty of the waters around Sicily with fish marinated in citrus; prawns lightly fried with sesame seeds; and a lobster sauce with the agnolotti pasta. Our main was oven roasted rack of lamb followed by a popular Sicilian dessert of hazelnut and almond parfait, served with a cinnamon ice cream. Bravo Pietro!

The next day it was south to Syracuse with several hours to explore before travelling on to the Baroque city of Noto. Dinner that evening was at the La Corte del Sole, amidst olive groves and vineyards. The main course sparked much debate: was it apricot sauce or kumquat sauce? Both camps won as the pork was served with both apricot and kumquat jam on a bed of pumpkin seeds. A delightful red made with Nero d'Avola accompanied and a smoked almond blancmange slipped down easily.

Friday was spent in the Valle dei Templi at Agrigento. Today a UNESCO World Heritage site, it was founded by settlers from Rhodes in 580BC. There is no 'Valle' (Valley): the temples are on a ridge that can be seen for miles around!

'We were treated to a nightly display of volcanic activity and could clearly see the glowing lava flows'

The next two nights were spent at the delightfully peaceful new Momentum Resort near Mazara. Dinner consisted of swordfish pouches filled with Aubergine mousse, sitting in a thick gazpacho style sauce made from local tomatoes, with a local Gorgi Tondi 'Grillo. Our main course was also 'stuffed', with loin of rabbit encasing figs and parsnip, served with a chocolate and Nero d'Avola sauce. Accompanying the main was the 2020 Gorgi Tondi Syrah – the only Syrah on the tour. The finale was all about fresh strawberries.

The following day at the Planeta home estate in Ulmo we were warmly greeted by Alessio Planeta, current head of a family that has been making wines for seventeen generations. Planeta is proudly organic, an innovator and, since 2011, has held a certificate in sustainability. Alessio took us through the history of the estate before a tutored tasting in the old farmhouse overlooking Lago Aranico. Then we enjoyed another of their fabulous open-air lunches.

That evening we dined at Al Pesciolino d'Oro, one of Mazarra's wonderful trattorias right on the shore. The Chef is Franco, one of the D'Agostino family. The visually stunning seafood entrée (including an octopus tentacle) was followed by a pasta and prawn dish, and then stuffed mullet. A delicate, deconstructed canoli was served for dessert accompanied by a Marsala Vergine.

‘This ‘light lunch’ turned out to be a wonderful multi course event, accompanied by a stunning range of wines’

Sunday was dedicated to Marsala and dessert wines from both the houses of Donnafugata and Pellegrino. Marsala is made principally from three white grape varieties fortified with neutral grape brandy, sweetened, then aged in oak. In the cellar we were invited to taste the ‘1880’ Marsala Vergine Soleras. The enormous ‘silos’ used by Pellegrino to age its Marsala have a diameter of seven metres and are 25 metres high.

We enjoyed a lunch of Sicilian ‘street food favourites’ accompanied by Pellegrino’s wines, and then visited the spectacularly located amphitheatre and temple built by the Greeks at Segesta. The temple is considered one of the most intact, unrestored temples in the world. On we went to the city of Palermo and the Grand Hotel Piazza Borsa, centrally located in the old city. After the long, hot day, drinks in the hotel courtyard followed by dinner, were very welcome. Monday was a relaxed day for exploring the old city and its wonderful architecture.

Later we dined in the port of Bagheria at one star Michelin Ristorante, I Pupi, with food prepared by Chef Tony La Coco. Tony’s cooking was the highlight of Stanley Tucci’s Netflix visit to Sicily. The food was a visual and sensory treat. A mandarin-infused sparkling wine prepared the way for an appetiser of many tastes, including a puri with tomato pesto and an anchovy cream. Even the bread

accompaniment was Italian award winning. Next came tuna sliced to resemble pasta, with a rice cream and anchovy oil sauce. A deconstructed arancini in the shape of the Island of Sicily followed. We then enjoyed a ‘Reginetta’ – fresh pasta filled with sardines, ginger foam, and wild fennel. The main course was amberjack cooked in a wooden oven with an artichoke foam. A Verdello lemon and vanilla dessert was sprinkled with coffee sugar. One of our group, Michelin starred chef, Mike Womersley, opined that this stunning food was not just one star but approaching two in quality and innovation.

On our final day we visited the King of Sicilian wineries, Tasca d’Almerita, in the hills at Regaleali. Awarded in 2019 by Wine Enthusiast as the best European winery for sustainability and quality of wine, in 2021, Robert Parker nominated the vineyard in his ‘Top 100’. We stopped to admire the UNESCO Heritage listed, 12th century Norman Cathedral of Mon Reale, high on a hilltop with stunning views right to the coast. Again, exquisite mosaics abounded.

At the winery Count Alberto Tasca himself, 8th generation of the family, welcomed us and reminded us that his grandfather was a Chaîne member. He handed us over to the Estate Manager, the hugely enthusiastic Corrado Maurigi, for the remainder of a superb visit.

The 600 hectare estate is in stunningly beautiful countryside, growing 15 varieties of grapes on 12 different types of soil. It is unique being in the centre of Sicily and at a higher altitude than many other vineyards. An ancient wheat is also grown there, lower in gluten than traditional wheat, and popular for bread. The Capofaro estate bread was voted ‘best bread in Italy’ by Gambero Rosso. Then, to quote Philip, we were to enjoy another ‘light lunch’ in the family house. This ‘light lunch’ turned out to be a wonderful multi course event, accompanied by a stunning range of wines. It was truly worth all the trouble of finding and getting to the vineyard. A street of parked cars had to be cleared in the local town so that the coach could make it through!

Our final dinner was at Ristorante Palazzo Branciforte by Chef Gaetano Billeci and then, after ten days, we said ‘Ciao’ to this wonderful island and its people and products. Our thanks, as always to Philip and Janet. Had we conquered Sicily? Like other ‘invaders’, we found it impossible to do so in just one visit. But the joy of travel is knowing that you can always return for more.

Edwina Morris



‘The Cannoli Kids’!



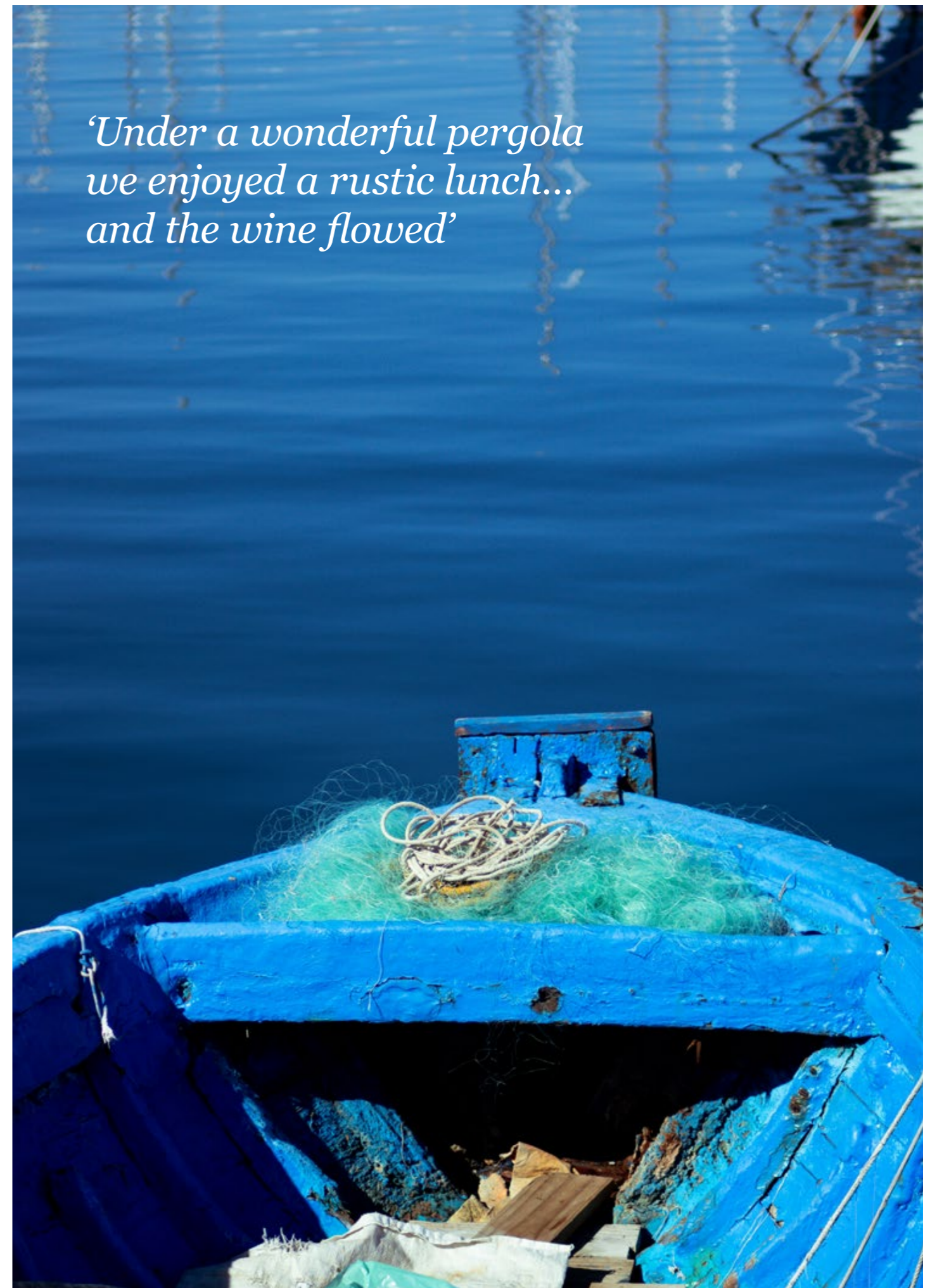
Laura Codogno, Philip Evins, Tony La Coco and Andrea Prizzi



Paul Smith, Peter George, Philip Evins, Pietro D’Agostino and Alan Cox

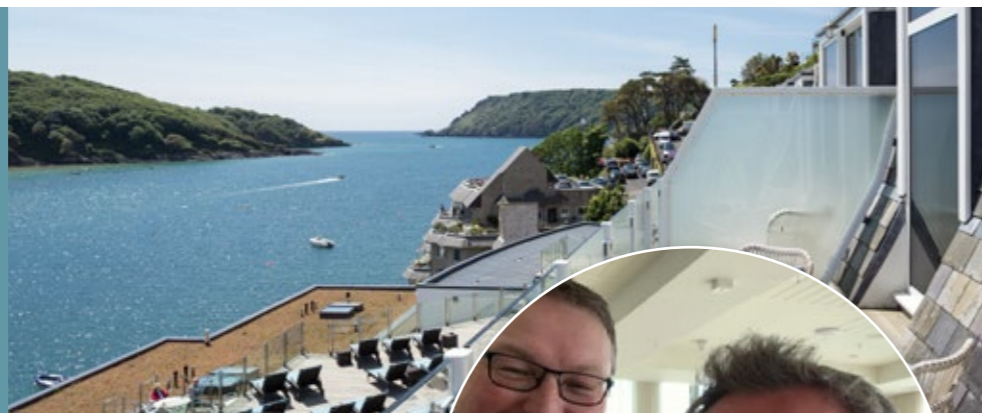


Ciao!



Countrywide *with the Chaîne*

SUMMER LUNCH AT SALCOMBE HARBOUR HOTEL



Jason Parry and Mark Godfrey

The South West Bailliage was blessed, yet again, to be in Salcombe in the sunshine at the Harbour Hotel with Maître Hotelier Jason Parry. A 'casual' lunch with the estuary in the background, a glass of Verve Clicquot Rosé Brut in the hand and a few delicious canapés to savour. There is not much better in life!

Plymouth mackerel, with salt cured, pickled vegetables, beetroot and samphire, brought the taste of the sea in abundance. Paired with a crisp glass of Riesling, Jean-Baptiste Adam, Alsace, France 2017, we were off to a great start.

Continuing with the theme of the sea, south coast hake, was the next catch, served with artichoke gnocchi and grilled asparagus matched with a Picpoul de Pinet, Languedoc, France 2019. The Picpoul and asparagus worked very well alongside the freshest hake you have ever tasted.

Main course was delicious local South Hams lamb. Short loin and braised shank served with wild garlic crumb, broad bean and peas, fondant potato and split jus. A plate of very good food beautifully paired with a Primitivo Blend, Appassimento Edizione Oro Rosso, Veneto, Italy 2020.

And as if we hadn't already enjoyed plentiful Devonshire portions, there were TWO desserts to summit. Firstly, a seasonal English strawberry, panna cotta, jelly, consommé with chamomile tea ice cream, served with a chilled Lyme Bay Reserve, Brut, Devon. Can you beat Devon strawberries and Devon Wine when in Devon? But then... there came dark chocolate mousse, honey ganache, cocoa nibs, and honeycomb paired with a Tokaj Patricius, Hungary, 2016. Potentially this was one too many desserts or was it...?

We enjoyed more camaraderie on the terrace with coffee and petit fours, so it was late in the day when we jumped ship and meandered through the lanes of Salcombe, finally arriving back at the sister hotel Salcombe Beach Club at South Sands. It is a very beautiful place, and the hotel is just feet from the beach. Certainly, one for you to try when in Devon.

Mark Godfrey



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ANGLIA ENJOY LUNCH AGAIN AT WEST SUFFOLK CATERING COLLEGE



Sherlie Vidler addresses the students after the meal

Once again the Anglian Baillage returned to Edmunds, the restaurant at West Suffolk catering College in Bury St. Edmunds, where we were hosted by Chef Stuart Ascott and Manager Claire Waterson.

Our stated plan is to visit each of the local catering colleges in rotation as our first event of the year, but Edmunds is so consistently excellent that we find ourselves returning again and again. This year was no exception.

The tutors had set a high standard for the mainly 3rd-year students, with an imaginative and challenging menu. A choice of three delightful canapés was served with our simple Prosecco Vin d'Honneur – Whipped Goats' Cheese and Beetroot; Smoked Haddock Croquette with Hollandaise and Quail's Egg; and Chicken Caesar with a Parmesan Crisp.

The canapés were followed by a service of Adnam's Ghost Ship Sourdough, made with one of our local beers, and served with Whipped Treacle Butter. The strange-sounding name of this butter initially put people off, but as soon as a few of us realised how well it complemented the

sourdough bread, word soon got around!

Our next course was a delicate and smooth Jerusalem Artichoke Velouté, served with a Binham Blue Cheese and Pickled Walnut Bon-Bon, caramelised Pear, and Celery cress. No wine with the soup, very sensibly, but a very palatable 2020 Ana Sauvignon Blanc from Marlborough, New Zealand was paired with our fish course. The Butter poached Plaice was served with Roasted Cauliflower, capers, dates, and flaked almonds, set in a coriander-flavoured shellfish bisque.

The main course of Ginger and Soy Braised Beef Short Rib, was served with orange and cardamom glazed carrots, oyster emulsion and oyster leaf. We ended the meal with a dessert of Poached Rhubarb with Baked Yoghurt – a lovely variation on Creme Brûlée – served with Honeycomb, and Blood Orange and Rosemary sorbet. These were all complex dishes for the students, but superbly prepared and presented. The individual flavours in each dish were well defined on the palate. Great stuff even down to the selection of Petits Fours served with coffee.

It was with real pleasure that we were able to congratulate the brigade and front of house teams with their tutors. We spent time chatting before being given the privilege of a private kitchen tour. We did note that a couple of chefs from well-respected local restaurants were also dining in the restaurant that day, clearly doing a bit of talent spotting!

It is so rewarding to see such good students coming through in these difficult circumstances. Well done West Suffolk College!

Chris Lewis



THE QUAY TO SUCCESS

The Elderflower is situated on cobbled, sloping Quay Street in Lymington. A bijou and popular venue for the Wessex Bailliage because of the warmth of the welcome and the excellence of the food. All with the bonus of a good train service to Lymington!

This unique restaurant is the realisation of Andrew and Marjolaine Du Bourg's dream, expressing their perception of the perfect dining experience. No menus are published in advance. The day's menu is based on what Head Chef Patron & Maître Rôtisseur Andrew (formerly of Chewton Glen and Club Gascon) finds to be good and interesting off the day boats in Lymington and from the farmers and gardeners around the New Forest. The result is modern British food with a sprinkling of French – and a box of surprises for the diner.

Each of the four courses was served with a delightful description of the artful composition on each plate and of the accompanying French wines. A perfectly cooked quail's egg with truffle accessories; crab and Solent bass garnished with stuffed tulip; Hampshire lamb with flavours of garlic and rosemary; lavender, liquorice, basil, and black olive making the strawberry celebration scented and flavoursome - this was an exceptional dining experience.

The usual toasts and thanks were heartfelt. Au revours were said... then there was a train to catch!

Janet Epton



Philip Evins, Andrew & Marjolaine Du Bourg and Paul Smith



DINNER AT RATHFINNY'S EUROPE'S LARGEST SPARKLING WINE VINEYARD

It was a bright sunny day as several of the Chaîne's national officers and a few overseas members joined the Sussex Dames et Chevaliers on the terrace overlooking Europe's largest single sparkling wine vineyard in Alfriston, East Sussex. Rathfinny's hosted this major event for the Sussex Bailliage.

Five years ago, partners Mark and Sarah Driver released their first sparkling wines made entirely from their own plantings of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Meunier. Having acquired the estate in 2010, no expense was spared setting up a state of art gravity-fed winery with Coquard press. This is the only Electrodialysis plant in the UK, using much less power than conventional techniques to remove tartrate deposits by cold stabilisation.

Rathfinny's visitor experience is second to none with its Michelin listed, tasting room restaurant. Mark introduced the latest 2018 Classic Cuvée release – sumptuous fruit from one of the warmest growing seasons this century, along with canapés and a presentation about his and Sarah's project.

Hampshire, Kent and even a few other Sussex wine producers were rattled when Driver launched a Sussex Appellation Contrôlée application in 2016.

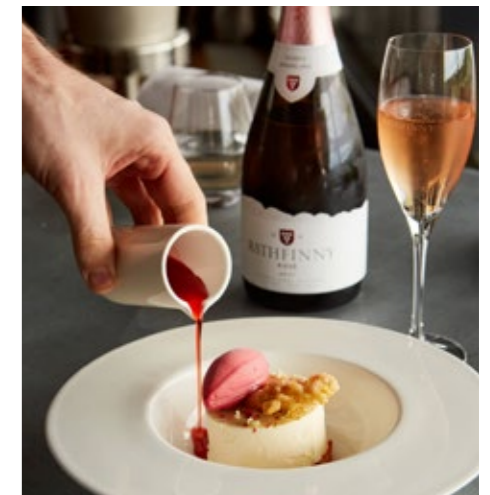
Chef Chris Baily prepared a stunning 5 course meal, with local smoked trout and 'Big Green Egg' chargrilled beef sirloin. After savouring the last few remaining bottles of 2015 Blanc de Noir, we enjoyed some icon Rhône still wines with the food – the aptly named Chevalier Stermiberg 2014 from Jaboulet, and the famous Perrin Family's Coudoulet de Beaucastel 2017.

Philip Evins thanked the whole team, Mark, Chris, Jacob, Abby and, Josh for a superb evening. Some of the party wandered to the Estate's Flint Barns to their comfortable on-site accommodation, with the rest of us heading for other accommodation in Alfriston or making for home.

Dominic Buckwell



'Rathfinny's visitor experience is second to none with its Michelin listed, tasting room restaurant'



We caught up with James, MD, Master Innholder, and Officier Maître Hôtelier, in his ‘get-away-from-it-all’ office, a cottage in the grounds of Carey’s Manor outside Brockenhurst. And put our first question to him:

How did you start in the hospitality business?

‘I was not particularly focussed at school in Portsmouth, where I was born and brought up,’ he confesses. ‘I could not decide what I wanted to do. In the end it was my mother who made that decision for me. As I enjoyed visiting hotels and restaurants, and loved talking to people, she reasoned, why not try hospitality? And here I am, 35 years later!’

After learning to cook and serve at the local Highbury College, a two year restaurant management course followed. Then, at 21, James ‘escaped’ to his first job as a trainee manager ironically, at Carey’s Manor, where he was to return in 2004. His for ever place, it seems

‘I absolutely loved it,’ he enthuses, ‘and realised this is what I would really enjoy. We worked crazy hours, but it didn’t matter - I was buzzing. It became my burning ambition to make General Manager by the time I was thirty.’

But first, there was experience to be gained. James left Brockenhurst to work at Stone Easton in Somerset, at the Bath Spa Hotel, to head up Rooms Operations, and then on to London’s Athenaeum as Resident Manager.

Now it was time to realise his ambition. The Leach family called him back to scenic Beaulieu in the New Forest and offered him the position of General Manager at their Montagu Arms Hotel. James was just 30. After three happy years there, John Leach asked him to take on nearby Carey’s Manor, to oversee the launch of the £6 million Senspa. ‘It was ground-breaking at the time, when spa complexes were only to be found in cities, not in country hotels in Hampshire. Today it has become in itself an all-year-round destination.’

In 2006 it was decided to run both hotels together. With James at the helm the Montagu Arms gained a Michelin star and AA Red Star status. Ten years later he was appointed Managing Director of the Greenclose Hotel group, including the elegant Imperial Hotel in Llandudno.

So, James, who has inspired you along the way?

‘While I was in Bath, I worked under three General Managers - Robin Shepherd (now President of Bespoke Hotels), Chris Oakes and the late Michael Grange.



**‘On the grill’ with:
James Hiley-Jones**

**Managing Director,
Greenclose Hotels**

It seems that James Hiley-Jones has the best of all worlds - an exciting and challenging role as Managing Director of Greenclose Hotels; a twenty-year relationship with the owning family built on mutual trust; and an idyllic working base deep in the heart of the New Forest.

He lives nearby with his wife Shoonah, his two younger daughters... and two New Forest ponies. ‘What more could I want?’ he beams. ‘I can’t see myself moving on any time soon.’

They were all so inspirational, and really taught me the business.’

But it is James’ relationship with the Leach family, and with John Leach in particular, that has been his lifelong inspiration. ‘I’ve been extremely fortunate to work for the family for so many years’, he says. ‘Throughout my career, John has been my mentor and guide. He knows me so well – when to deliver a verbal ‘clip round the ear’ and when to praise and encourage me. He has always shown me incredible respect. As I do him.’

And what now with the hotels, after the pandemic?

‘Like all of us in the business, the pandemic hit hard, particularly as our hotels are centred on country breaks and leisure. We became an NHS outpost, and a small team of staff volunteered to work for the patients and their carers. It was good to be able to help in that way.’

Even then, James and his team did not stand still. The group took advantage of the down-time to invest in the future, with major projects from technology updates to converting the mews garages at Carey’s Manor into courtyard studios. ‘We wanted to be ready to press GO once everyone started to travel again. Last summer was the most successful season we have known, thanks to the trend for staycations.’

And now the next challenge is the staffing crisis. Ever resourceful, James has hired his own recruiter rather than depending on agencies. The increasing utility costs are a problem too. ‘I liken my job to that of a conductor of an orchestra,’ he muses. ‘I might not be the best cook or waiter, but I know what to ask for. And what to look for.’

What does membership of the Chaîne mean to you?

I’m a hotelier who loves food, so meeting a wonderful group of people from all walks of life who have one common interest – great dining – is an absolute joy. Members have so much enthusiasm. The first Chaîne event I ever attended was back in the mid 90s, when the UK Grand Chapitre was held at the Bath Spa, where I was working. I was right in the thick of it!’

On a personal level, apart from your own, which would be your favourite restaurant and why?

‘It’s a little taverna in the corner of a beautiful unspoiled bay in north-east Corfu called Taverna Kerasia. The views are spectacular, and the food very simple. I would choose a Greek salad, where the flavours are sensational, and grilled sardines washed down with some local Rosé.’

Finally, what would be your desert island meal and who would cook it?

‘I like the simple things, so I would ask Tom Kerridge to cook us his chicken Kiev – or Kyiv as it should be now. I love his unfussy approach to food, and his brilliant execution. My wife and I would be very happy to share our desert island with him.’ For dessert, I’m very partial to a sherry trifle, the delicious kind my mother used to make. I have such happy childhood memories of that.’

Fiona Campbell

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Congratulations



**INTRODUCING THE NEW BAILLI OF
YORKSHIRE – GILLIAN KENDALL**

Over 30 years ago, while in the Arabian Gulf accompanying her husband Ted, who was working in the military at that time, Gill, as a foodie and someone who enjoyed cooking and trying new cuisine, became a food writer for the ‘Abu Dhabi Explorer’ – a food arm of the Lonely Planet guide.

Starting in the most primitive street food outlets and cockroach-infested bus stations, she worked her way through multinational cuisines from Arabic, Indian, Thai, Sri Lankan, Japanese, and

Mexican, eventually covering the most prestigious hotels in Abu Dhabi.

As a result of Gill’s writing, her husband was invited to join La Chaîne des Rôtisseurs! Women were not allowed to join at that time in the Middle East. Eventually, getting over her rancour, she joined La Chaîne in her own right in York, and was appointed as Vice-Echanson a number of years ago. She now continues to explore emerging, unusual, and fine-dining venues and hostels in God’s own county of Yorkshire.

**INTRODUCING THE NEW BAILLI
OF COTSWOLDS –
JACQUELINE HORSFIELD**

Upon retiring and moving to England from Bermuda in 2020, Jacqueline and her husband realised that they would need to reinvent their social life. The camaraderie offered by the Chaîne was a good solution and the Cotswold Balliage immediately welcomed them into the fold. Using her time productively was another key thing for Jacqueline, so she had no hesitation when invited to join the committee.

Her professional background is varied and began with a career in hospitality for 20 years. ‘It’s already been a pleasure to assist in organising some convivial events, as well as working with the committee to review ways of encouraging new members to join and to increase the membership.’ As the new Bailli, she looks forward to presenting a vibrant programme in 2023, timed to complement those of Cotswolds Chaîne neighbours.



INTRODUCING THE NEW BAILLI OF SUSSEX – TIM MOORE



Tim and Ellie Moore live in Godstone close to the Sussex border. It seems that Tim has an ideal background as a potential Bailli having had a life-long interest in wine and food and many years ago obtained WSET Certificate. He is a member of the Confrerie du Sabre d’Or and is now a Commandeur. It was actually at one of their events that he became aware of the Chaîne and subsequently joined. Tim is also a longstanding member of Croydon Dining Club which was founded in 1969 with similar objectives to the Chaîne. His second presidency coincided with the Club’s 50th anniversary: the highlight of the celebratory events being a four day trip to Bordeaux. Tim has been chairman

of the Club’s Dining Committee for nearly 20 years and says, ‘Yes, there have certainly been some serious lunches at Sussex restaurants and many visits to Sussex vineyards!’

Loving the Greek islands, he is also something of a Francophile and organised a week long trip for 14 friends and family members in the Côte de Beaune, earlier this year. He is a golfer, enjoys cooking, gardening, and reading (especially food books) and has a reasonable collection of wine in his cellar. Never happier than with a decent glass of wine in his hand, he concludes: ‘Good wine and food is one of life’s greatest pleasures.’



ALBURY VINEYARD ORGANIC AND BIODYNAMIC



Nick Wenman

Albury Organic Vineyard is the result of Nick Wenman's passion for quality wine. Nick, a Professional Du Vin in the Chaîne since 2016, planted the vineyard in 2009, having retired from the IT industry to fulfil his dream of owning a vineyard.

'Ever since I was old enough to drink wine, I have always dreamt of owning a vineyard. It's taken me more than 40 years to get there but I'm now lucky enough to have fulfilled my dream. Working with a passionate team producing great wine in the beautiful Surrey Hills. What more could I ask for?'

Nick believes the key to the success of their wines starts with the vineyard's commitment to organic and biodynamic principles, together with excellent winemakers and his talented Estate Manager, Alex, one of the few female vineyard managers in the UK. Her expertise, and that of Vineyard Manager Dominic, is vital to the running of the vineyard, and her dogs – Attila, Ulysses and Mildred – are well loved by visitors! Albury is a family-run vineyard, with Lucy, Nick's daughter now a key member of the team. Granddaughter Poppy is a regular visitor – if only to visit the beehives and sneak a taste of the honey!

The Vineyard is situated on the southern slopes of the North Downs, just outside Guildford in the beautiful Surrey Hills, an area of outstanding natural beauty. The vines are mainly the traditional Champagne varieties of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier, as well as some Seyval and Pinot Gris. Albury are committed to growing organic fruit, without the use of chemicals such as herbicides and fungicides and to producing award winning English wines, a still rosé and a range of quality sparkling wines. Their first wine was served on the Royal Barge as part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. Since then, their wines have been listed at numerous prestigious venues including The Royal Opera House, Raymond Blanc's Le Manoir Aux Quat'Saisons, Tommy Banks' The Black Swan, Tom Kerridge's Hand of Flowers, Chez Bruce and Fera at Claridges.

Organic and Biodynamic

Nick says 'Many people ask us why we decided to grow vines organically, and it's true that managing an organic vineyard is not easy in this country! But we truly believe that organic viticulture produces better quality fruit and ultimately better-quality wine.'

Growing vines organically means that we avoid the use of herbicides and pesticides, but we've gone one step further and are one of the only vineyards in the UK to follow biodynamic principles. Biodynamics aims to encourage harmony between the soil, the vines and the cosmos using compost teas and biodynamic preparations. For example, each winter we bury cow horns filled with manure on the vineyard. They are dug up in the spring and the contents sprayed on the vineyard to improve fertility. We believe that this results in a more naturally healthy, bio-diverse and sustainable vineyard, producing wine with a unique sense of place or terroir.'

Champions of Sustainability

We at Albury are also passionate about making great wine sustainably by putting the environment first. Sustainability is a core value whether it's by managing the vineyard itself alongside nature, using recyclable packaging, improving recycling initiatives, or by reducing waste and our carbon footprint.

'Whilst our focus is on the environment, sustainability for us is also about valuing people and contributing to society, now and in the future. We're committed to shaping the future of the UK wine industry through educating and inspiring others to strive towards greater sustainability,' says Nick. 'Our new wildlife walk will allow our many visitors to experience the benefits of nature first hand, whilst sampling our award-winning wines.'

Nick Wenman



'Biodynamics aims to encourage harmony between the soil, the vines and the cosmos using compost teas and biodynamic preparations'



Albury is a founding member of the Wine GB Sustainability scheme. More details about the vineyard and their wines are available at www.alburyvineyard.com

62ND GRAND CHAPITRE OXFORD

29 September – 2 October 2022



Matthew Arnold's 'City of Dreaming Spires' is the location for our Grand Chapitre. A really fantastic opportunity to meet friends, old and new, and learn more of this historical centre of learning. Founded in 1096 the prestigious University is the oldest in the English-speaking world and the second oldest globally. Consisting of 39 constituent colleges which are scattered throughout the city, and whose beautiful sandstone buildings are a joy to the eye. This is a city for walking and our programme will include private walking tours.

The programme will also include a visit to the home of the Dukes of Marlborough, Blenheim Palace in Woodstock, a stunning World Heritage Site set in 2000 acres of grounds. Currently the 12th Duke lives there with his family. This was where Winston Churchill was born and lived as a boy. At the time of our visit there will be a special Churchill Exhibition. Our private lunch will be taken in the Marlborough Room.

Another trip will be to Stratford upon Avon. Here you will have the option of a private guided tour of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and key Shakespeare places in the town, or a short

canal trip and guided tour of the town. Led by a Blue Badge guide, the town tour will include key buildings associated with Shakespeare, such as his birthplace, school, or New Place where he lived. Lunch will be in the Theatre's Rooftop Restaurant. Afterwards there is time to make a quick visit to Holy Trinity Church where Shakespeare is buried.

We have a very special venue for those being inducted - St Mary's University Church. This beautiful medieval building in the heart of the University was previously where degree ceremonies were held.

We will have the privilege of dining in two famous Colleges. The Welcome Dinner will be hosted in the Dining Hall of St Johns College with, weather permitting, drinks in the wonderful gardens. Our Gala Dinner will be held in Keble College, one of the larger Colleges: at just 150 years old it is a very fine example of Victorian Gothic architecture. More informal meals will be held in The Old Bank Hotel and the Cherwell Boathouse.

This year we hope to be welcoming members and guests from overseas once more.

Diary Dates

Make a note of these dates in your diary.

62nd Grand Chapitre, Oxford
29 September – 2 October 2022

OMGD Winemaker Dinner, London
18 November 2022

Young Chef Competition,
Leatherhead
13/14 April 2023

Young Sommelier Competition,
London
17 April 2023

World Chaîne Day
22 April 2023

Young Professionals Awards Lunch,
London
12 May 2023

63rd Grand Chapitre, Birmingham
28 September – 1 October 2023



REGISTER ONLINE

www.chaine.co.uk/grand-chapitre/register



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