



WINTER 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**

Congratulations to our newly-appointed officers

**ON THE GRILL**

With Duncan Palmer of The Beaumont, Mayfair

**OMGD, GUSBOURNE ESTATE**

Embracing tradition, challenging convention





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# In this issue...

## Young Professionals International Competitions



Autumn in Paris and the Young Chefs Competitions for both 2020 and 2021 were underway with 22 competitors from 16 countries. Hats and aprons on, GB was represented by Ellie Shaw (2020) from The Clink and Kieran Bradley (2021) from The Vineyard, Stockcross.

## Gusbourne Estate – embracing tradition, challenging convention



Master Sommelier Laura Rhys writes about the ancient Wealdon terroir and maritime climate of the Gusbourne Estate, and about the work of today's Wine Managers and Winemakers. Each vintage, she says, 'presents an authentic reflection of a time and place.'

## On The Grill – an interview with Duncan Palmer of The Beaumont



The refurbishment and extension of just one large, international, luxury hotel would be a daunting prospect for all but the few. Duncan Palmer is one of the few, still undaunted after a lifetime's experience of such herculean projects.

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ChaîneGB



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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@chaine.co.uk](mailto:online-editor@chaine.co.uk)

Photographs of events are now available on [www.photos.chaine.co.uk](http://www.photos.chaine.co.uk)

To follow the Chaîne news online internationally, visit [www.chainedesrotisseurs.com/news\\_online](http://www.chainedesrotisseurs.com/news_online)



# Dear members and friends



Starting with the Grand Chapitre last September, things have been getting back towards normal and, hopefully, by the end of the winter this recovery will be complete. Thank you all for your understanding of the challenges of putting on events, and the changes and procedures that many have

entailed. Even as I write this with the Omicron variant wave, we all hope that the industry will be back to a normal footing by springtime. Looking at the programmes of the regional Bailliages, I know you are all in for some treats.

I am delighted to welcome two new Baillis, John Wigg as Bailli of Solent and Tim Spencer as Bailli of London City. You can find more details elsewhere in this edition (p16).

After a year in which your membership fees were happily funded out of National reserves – we believe that GB was the only country to do this – our finances are ‘running on an empty tank’ and I encourage you all to pay your fees promptly now,

in order to save us having a cash flow problem. We plan to rebuild the reserves gradually over the next few years so we can respond, once more, should something unexpected arise. Thank you for your help.

Travel restrictions and requirements are still changing, but we are all hoping that the many overseas members who regularly attend our Grand Chapitre will be able to join us in Oxford in September (more details on p20).

Finally, could I encourage you all to think of our professionals and their businesses in continuing tough times. By dining out you do much to support these establishments. My warmest wishes for a prosperous and enjoyable year ahead.

Vive la Chaîne!

Bailli Délégué  
Membre du Conseil Magistral

## Camaraderie *on camera*



Alistair & Joanne Assheton



Pauline & Charles Frise



Barney & Jenny Quinn



Chris & Pauline James



Tony & Helen Wernham



Dami Babalola



Andrew & Jacqueline Horsfield



Darryl & Tanya Thomson and  
David Edwards



# Camaraderie *on camera*



Lauren & Tim Spencer



Tony Ball and Beverley Holt



Dan Lai, Kim Tan, Danwei Zhao, William Tan and Xi Zhao



Luskaz Dwornik, Jane Renton and Mark Godfrey



Mimi Tumkaya & Turkey Ozkan



Jason Parry and Emily Hardy



Leslie Cuthbert & Susan Bradford



Mike Monahan and Philip Evins



Richard & Christine Maxwell



Caroline Stevens & Phil Jeffrey



David & Andrea Levene



Alex Armstrong and Sara Al-Ghunaim



Peter & Jill Welsh



Michael & Marie Ryan



# INTERNATIONAL FINAL OF THE JEUNES CHEFS RÔTISSEURS COMPETITION



Kieran Bradley and Ellie Shaw



At The Peninsula

The 44th International Final of the Jeunes Chefs Competition was held in September at Le Cordon Bleu Paris – the setting for both the 2020 and 2021 competitions. Given the ongoing effects of the global pandemic, it was amazing to see so many great young chefs on show. In all there were 22 competitors from 16 countries and what a competition it was!

GB was represented by Ellie Shaw (2020) from The Clink and Kieran Bradley (2021) from The Vineyard, Stockcross. Both Ellie and Kieran produced some outstanding dishes, but it was the chefs from Norway who eventually came away as winners for both 2020 and 2021.

It was an amazing experience for all involved. Before the big day of the competition and the opening of that famous 'black box', the young chefs were treated to fantastic dining experiences and fascinating farm tours.

This year's main protein, advised one month in advance, was a whole Soulard duck. Other ingredients, in this year's very challenging 'black box', included scallops, snails, ROVA caviar, Mirabelle plums, whole quince, artichokes and red rice. With just 30 minutes in which to plan a menu from the 'black box' (supplemented by common table ingredients) the chefs then had three and a half hours to cook a three-course meal for four covers. As usual, a panel of international judges tasted and marked the meals.

The Peninsula Paris provided the perfect setting for the Awards Dinner and for the announcement and presentation of the awards. A fitting finale to this year's outstanding competition. The baton was handed on to... drum roll please... MEXICO – our hosts for the 2022 international competition.

*'Given the ongoing effects of the global pandemic, it was amazing to see so many great young chefs on show'*

Both Ellie and Kieran had a 'once in a lifetime' experience in Paris and are extremely proud of their achievements. We are super proud of them too. After this most challenging of years, huge thanks go to all involved in making this inspirational competition happen. To all the international support teams in Paris, all the competitors, the judges and, of course, to Le Cordon Bleu we say thank you, merci. See you next year in Mexico.

Ben Purton

## INTERNATIONAL JEUNE SOMMELIERS COMPETITION 2021



The International Jeune Sommeliers competition made a welcome return this Autumn. With just ten countries able to run National competitions, competitors from Belgium, Finland, Great Britain, Korea, Mexico, Myanmar, The Netherlands, and Norway finally travelled to Lyon in France.

Lyon is a Roman city built on two hills. The Basilica of Notre-Dame de Fourvière stands on 'the hills that pray', and 'the hills that work' are where the silk workers (les canuts), upon which much of Lyon's wealth was built, plied their trade. Lyon also has two rivers, the Rhône and the Saône, and our base for the competition was in between the two at the beautiful Intercontinental Hotel based in the

Hôtel Dieu, a former medieval hospital.

The Jeunes Sommeliers' adventures were arranged by our Bailli Délégué, a member of the International Jeune Sommeliers Competition Committee, and began with a trip out of Lyon to Château L'Ampuis, home of E. Guigal wines, for an exploration of its three hectares of cellars. Our guide, Operations Director Jacques Devernois explained that Guigal is a veritable family affair with Etienne Guigal having been responsible for 67 vintages of wine and his son, Marcel, catching up with 62 vintages, and third generation, Phillipe, having joined in 1993.

With a distinct focus on efficacy and efficiency some wines are blended in 76

hectolitre tanks which can hold the equivalent of 100,000 bottles worth of wine. A hugely impressive automated, robotic bottling line packs some 5,000 bottles an hour. Guigal recently completed the take-over of wine producer, Vidal Fleurie, and between them they produce some 8 million bottles a year. Guigal employs its own cooper who makes up to 5 barrels a day – 800 barrels a year. After the US, the UK is its biggest export market.

The young sommeliers were treated to 12 different wines and vintages, with La Dorione Condrieu 2020 and the Cote-Rotie La Mouline 2017 being distinct highlights. As with many French wines, 2015 was said to be an outstanding vintage for Guigal, whilst 2021 is more 'rustic', needing time to age with less alcohol within it.

Our next tasting was accompanied by food at Vineum in Tain L'Hermitage. The wines of Paul Jaboulet Aine were introduced by brand ambassador Laetitia Terry. To accompany the starter of smoke salmon rilette there were three white wines – the Hermitage 'Le Chevalier de Sterimberg' 2017 being deemed the favourite. With the main course of braised beef, came four Hermitage reds and a Hermitage, 'La Chappelle', from 2006. There was then barely enough time for those who wanted to make the steep hike up to the Chappelle St Christophe, or to have a more leisurely look around the Valrhona, 'City of Chocolate'.

Later, we headed to the fin de siècle marvel that is 'Le Bistrot de Lyon'. Here was the opportunity to taste the wines of George Duboeuf under the tutelage of Romain Teyteau, the brand's representative in America. Romain was a deep fount of knowledge. Did you know that 'Bistrot' is Russian for 'fast'? Hungry soldiers stationed in the city regularly used the word. On the eve of the competition, the generous menu ensured that our competitors were sufficiently sated for the challenging tasks ahead. The artichoke and duck foie gras starter, served in the Mère Brazier (mother restaurant) style was delicious, especially coupled with the Saint-Veran Domaine Saint-Martin 2018.

A 2019 Morgon and 2020 Brouilly were served with the Bresse chicken, macaroni gratin and

porcini mushrooms. The best macaroni cheese – ever! The highlight though was the cheese course, not simply for the Saint-Marcellin and Cervelle des canuts, but for the accompanying 2019 Fleurie Domaine des Vents and Moulin-a-Vent Domaine de Pourpre 2015 – often referred to as the Queen of Beaujolais or the 'Margaret Thatcher' of wines! The 2019 vintage of this wine was given 97 points by Decanter magazine – the highest score ever given for a



Fleurie and a Beaujolais.

Romain explained there were in fact three rivers in Lyon. The third being Beaujolais – the 'river' of wine consumed by the Lyonnaise. The now traditional Beaujolais Nouveau day was a creation of both Georges Duboeuf and British wine importers in the 1970s, competing to be the first to deliver the wines to London.

The Jeune Sommeliers competition began early the next morning with a written theory test and three practical tasks. Later, in the blind tasting test, competitors had 15 minutes to assess three wines. The judges throughout were the four Master Sommeliers: Stefan Neumann, Helga Schroeder, Tamas Czinki and Florent Martin. As the nominated head Judge Brian Julyan was unable to attend the competition, Stefan Neumann had stepped in at very short notice.

At Les Ardrets, a restaurant in Vieux Lyon, our host for that evening was the eminently knowledgeable Cyril Chirouze from Domaine

Château des Jacques, now owned by Maison Louis Jadot. He introduced several of the Château's wines and a tasting before dinner involved varieties of Morgon, Fleurie and Moulin-a-Vent from 2009 through to 2018.

The irrepressible George dos Santos of Antic Wines further charmed the ensemble when he generously added to the official wines, enabling everyone to engage in some additional, non-competitive, blind tasting – a 1950s Colheita Port proved memorable. Another highlight was the traditional Lyonnaise pie, filled with a myriad of meats and cooked for several hours. A Beaujolais Clos de Loyse 2019 was a perfect accompaniment.

The three grand finalists were revealed the next morning. Great Britain had made it again, along with competitors from Korea and Norway. Faced with a packed auditorium, the finalists undertook four tasks – further testing their skill, knowledge, and multi-tasking abilities. After a short break came a 'Mastermind' style, quick-fire quiz involving 11 wine-related images and the final traditional challenge of opening a double Magnum of champagne and pouring 16 glasses in seven minutes.

The competition results were announced in style at the Abbaye de Collonges, run by staff from the nearby Michelin 2-Star Restaurant Paul Bocuse. It is said that there was something of P.T. Barnum about Paul Bocuse and the setting for dinner was very reminiscent of a big top full of colourful lights, with the curtain being opened to welcome diners in.

Against this fabulous backdrop, GB's Mark Patana from the London City Bailliage received the Bronze Medal. Ko Dong-Yeon from Korea took the Silver Medal and Nikolai Svorte from Norway won the Gold Medal. This made a wonderful hat-trick for Norway as, earlier in the year, they had also won the Jeune Chef Competitions for both 2020 and 2021.

For me, as Echanson, and for the whole GB contingent – Philip and Janet Evins, Darryl and Tanya Thomson, Susan Bradford and head judge Stefan Neumann – it was truly a privilege to witness the endeavours of these fine young professionals. Au-revoir Lyon!

Leslie Cuthbert





# Countrywide *with the Chaîne*

## Wessex Lunch at The Dew Pond



Norman Wallage, Paul Smith and Richard Maxwell

Sunshine greeted members of Wessex Bailliage as we arrived for lunch at the Dew Pond Restaurant, an old favourite with Wessex members. Formerly a pair of 16th century cottages, located in the hamlet of Old Burghclere so very close to Highclere Castle, where Downton Abbey was filmed.

The Dew Pond is an independent family-owned restaurant that has been operated by Keith and Julie Marshall since 1989.

We were able to enjoy a pre-lunch glass of Prosecco NV Spumante Porto Leone Extra Dry from Treviso Italy in the garden, enjoying the sunshine and catching up with old friends again.

Chef Patron Keith, whose cooking is French inspired, likes to use the finest, locally sourced ingredients. The lovely menu he created for us started with a delicious twice-baked Soufflé of mature farmhouse cheddar with Spring Onion. This was followed by Breast of Creedy Duck and a Raspberry Pavlova for dessert. All the courses were accompanied with very well-matched wines.

The event concluded with coffee, everyone having enjoyed a very friendly afternoon with great food, and excellent service.

Christine Wallage

## ‘HERITAGE’ HIGHLIGHTS

The Sussex Baillage dinner at Heritage restaurant in Slaugham, Sussex took place in mid-November. Guests included Professional du Vin Tamara Roberts, CEO of Ridgeview, the internationally acclaimed producer of English Sparkling Wine, who kindly provided Blanc de Noir and Rosé de Noir wines to accompany the canapés and the first two courses of this fine seven course tasting menu. Prepared by Proprietor and Chef, Matt Gillan, the stand-out highlights were the seasonal venison loin (accompanied by Leeuwin Estate Art Series Shiraz 2016) and a second dessert of pumpkin custard, sticky toffee and pumpkin seed ice cream.

Dominic Buckwell



## COTSWOLDS AUTUMN LUNCH AT ‘RONNIE’S’ OF THORNBURY



The Cotswolds Baillage returned for another visit to ‘Ronnie’s’, an award-winning restaurant set in the heart of Thornbury and a particular favourite of the Baillage. Established in 2007 by Ron Faulkner, Ron used his years of experience and understanding of flavour combinations to create an exciting menu for us.

During the reception we chatted with Chaîne friends and guests over a glass of Woodchester Valley Cotswolds Classic Cuveé 2018, and then took our seats for lunch where the most delicious canapés were served.

The starter of Cornish crab cannelloni, roasted pepper and burnt pineapple was excellent and perfectly complemented by a Gizella Barat Harslevelu, 2019 from Hungary. Potato-crusted turbot, samphire, mussels and parsley sauce followed – all beautifully cooked and presented, and accompanied by a Spanish Xosé Lois Sebio Albarino ‘O Con’ Rias Baixas 2018. An autumnal dessert of plum upside down cake, with spiced rum caramel and mascarpone, was thoroughly enjoyed with a glass of Hungarian dessert wine.

Bailli Alan Cox warmly thanked Ron and his most attentive waiting staff for a wonderful lunch and all agreed that we will be back to ‘Ronnie’s’ again very soon!

Joanne Cook



# COTSWOLDS BAILLIAGE LUNCH AT LUCKNAM PARK



Hywel Jones and his Michelin-starred crew

November brought the final event of 2021 for the Cotswolds Bailliage – a luncheon held at Lucknam Park, a magnificent country house hotel set in 500 acres of listed parkland and beautiful gardens. Lucknam Park is a restored Palladian mansion dating from the 18th century and situated in Colerne, Wiltshire which is a few miles outside Bath. We were delighted that Philip Evins, Bailli Délégué, and his wife Janet, Conseiller Gastronomique, and David Edwards, Argentier de Grande Bretagne and his wife Julia were able to join us, as well as a number of Chaîne friends from other Baillages.

The luncheon began with a reception held in the Music Room where friends and guests chatted and enjoyed a glass of Champagne and some delicious canapés. We then made our way through to the elegant dining room. Executive Chef Hywel Jones has held a Michelin star at

the restaurant since 2006, and he talked us through the menu, explaining that the finest seasonal ingredients were used and, where possible, sourced from local suppliers. We just knew a treat lay in store!

The first of five courses was rolled, red-legged partridge with pistachio, violet artichoke and Wiltshire truffle, accompanied by a Cantina Tramin Pinot Nero Blauburgunder, Sudtirol, Italy 2019. The partridge, shot locally, was delicately flavoured. The braised Cornish day boat turbot with crab mayonnaise, cucumber chutney, and sea vegetables was both beautifully cooked and presented, and paired with a Albarino, Torre la Moreira, Rias Baixas, Spain 2020.

A Château Tabuteau, Lussac St Emilion, Bordeaux, France 2018 matched well with the delicious and tender venison from the local Neston Estate. This was served with caramelised Roscoff onion, smoked bacon

and cep tart with bramble chutney. A pre-dessert of almond, clementine and ginger followed.

Then for some fun! A caramelia chocolate bar dessert came with peanut butter and popcorn ice cream – all loosely and deliciously based on a Snickers bar! A Malbec Late Harvest, Laborum single vineyard, Bodega el Porvenir, Valle de Cafayate, Salta Argentina 2017 accompanied the dessert perfectly.

Philip Evins proposed the Santé du Chef et du service. Hywel Jones and the team were warmly thanked for this very special luncheon, deemed excellent by us all. A most enjoyable and convivial occasion to bring our 2021 events programme to an end.

Joanne Cook



Ladies from Wessex Bailliage gathered in the Wykeham Room, the private dining room at the Wykeham Arms in Winchester, for their annual ladies' lunch in September.

The Wykeham Arms is a unique 18th Century Coaching Inn, situated between Winchester Cathedral and the famous college named after William Wykeham, the 14th Century Bishop who founded Winchester College.

We were greeted by General Manager Jon Howard and served a pre-lunch drink. Head Chef Luke Emmess created a fabulous menu

for us with a choice of two dishes on the day for all three courses. The menu also included an Amuse of pea and broad bean risotto, mint, yoghurt and chicken skin. A choice of Picpoul de Pinet 2018 or Chateaux La Passonne 2016 was served with the meal, according to our taste and choice of food, with a bonus pre-dessert Pina Colada.

After a really convivial afternoon, and having been very well looked after by the staff, we were served tea or coffee before departing. It was great to be back!

Christine Wallage



# CHAÎNE ECOSSE — ‘NO AWA TAE BIDE AWA!’



Saturday 11th September 2021 was one of the happiest days in the annals of Chaîne Ecosse: after a long cessation of conviviality, huddled covid-cowering within the crepuscular confines of our wee bit but n’ bens, we emerged blinking in what passes for sunlight in Scotland to foregather in that favourite haunt, Edinburgh’s New Club, for the time-honoured ritual of pre-prandial drinks on a windswept balcony overlooking the verdant lawns and bosky sweep of Princes Street Gardens, hemmed around by the antique architecture of the Old Town and the towering walls of Edinburgh Castle. We hurled back our aperitifs and exhaled sighs of relief: la Chaîne redux!

Borborgymic acoustics from the vicinity of Phil Douglas signalled time for lunch and we sat down to a repast that, though excellent, was a bit-player on an occasion where the pleasure was in our reunion.

William Bruce

*Editor’s Note: Bill believes that the opening sentence of this article is the longest in the history of TableTalk. It echoes the long holding of breath between Chaîne events over the past year or so.*

## FESTIVE MAGIC AT MOSIMANN’S

Mosimann’s Club, located in the heart of Belgravia, is one of the most prestigious private dining clubs in the world. Since 2000, the Club has enjoyed a Royal Warrant by Appointment to HRH, The Prince of Wales, for Catering Services. This family-run business headed by Anton Mosimann (OBE), has been delighting diners for over 30 years.

The London Bailliage hosted a Festive Luncheon at the Club in December. Over 60 members and friends enjoyed a special afternoon amongst the stunning Christmas setting. This has become a regular event in our calendars — and for good reason.

It was a real treat to be welcomed by both Anton, and Mark Mosimann. And we were delighted that Marie Jones Vice-President International, Philip Evins Bailli Délégué and several Executive members and officers were able to join the festivities.

There was a wonderful camaraderie amongst the tables. — And what else would you have on your perfect Christmas menu, but Scottish smoked salmon, bronze turkey with, of course, cranberry sauce, followed by Mosimann’s Christmas Pudding extra spicy with cinnamon and clove icecream? This impeccable Christmas fare — with mince pies and biscuits too — was further enhanced by high-quality well-matched French, and Australian wines.

The service was also professional and exemplary, as we’ve come to expect from Mosimann’s. Marie Jones praised the occasion and also the wonderful staff, before proposing the Santé du Chef, seconded by the loud applause of our guests. Dare I say, we are already looking forward to a repeat (with variations on a theme) of this very enjoyable event.

Peter George





Thanks to the continued support of the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, we have been able to help over 140 Clink Graduates on release this year. Apart from providing work opportunities, £70,000 of financial support has averted many crisis situations due to financial hardship or lack of accommodation. Despite all the stop-start, difficult trading conditions in 2021, The Clink charity continued to innovate and change lives.

The Clink Restaurants have had a tough year. However, the training at HMP Cardiff and HMP Styal restarted in the Autumn and the public came back to dine with us. We were also able to keep serving meals to the public for a while at our training restaurant at HMP Brixton. A Click & Clink service was launched for busy prison staff and a delivery service also delivered ready-to-reheat-at-home meals to our customers. Training continued, on a small scale, at both HMP Brixton and HMP High Down, but outbreaks of the virus has brought disruptions. Hopefully, the restaurants will re-open to the public in the New Year.

We are particularly proud of Ellie Shaw our sous chef trainer based at HMP Brixton. Ellie, won UK young chef of the year in 2019, competed in Paris in the delayed international finals held in September 2020. She came 4th in a field of 23 young chefs representing prestigious establishments from around the world.

The Clink Gardens at Send remained active, though with fewer students and some restrictions. As well as planting out crops and looking after the chickens (still laying around 250 eggs a week!), the women were

able to supply Brixton with a wide variety of vegetables, herbs and salads. Garden training at HMP Down also restarted, just in time to get the winter crops in. As if the pandemic was not disruptive enough, flooding and snow and the re-vetting of contractors meant that a major project took over two years to complete, but HMP Styal now boasts a large 30 metre glasshouse and four 30 metre polytunnels. The benefits are more than just practical – one of our students at HMP Send explains: ‘My polytunnel is a little bit of freedom. Within this polytunnel I don’t feel like a prisoner.’

Following a successful three year pilot, it was rewarding to see our new training concept hit the ground running in April. The Clink Kitchens project places Clink Chef Trainers in the main prison kitchens. Prisoners are trained as they cook prisoners’ food, and they work towards City and Guilds qualifications. Upon release, there is further support for them in the community. To date, we have launched The Clink Kitchens in 25 prisons with another 32 planned. This new concept will see The Clink training up to 2,000 men and women a year for careers in the hospitality industry where, as you are aware, there are currently thousands of vacancies.

The Clink Events continues to go from strength to strength. We are now an approved caterer at 15 London venues including the Guildhall, St Paul’s Cathedral and Trinity house with Southwark Cathedral the latest to join. We are tendering for 5 more sites. This will mean our production training kitchen at HMP Downview can be kept busy, thus providing continuity of training for our students, and also for students from the Centrepoint Charity.

As I step down from my role as CEO, I can say it has been an honour to be at the helm and to co-create The Clink Integrated Rehabilitation Programme. It has certainly been my most challenging job, but also the most rewarding. The Clink looks very different from when I first met with two of the trustees back in 2010. The charity was just three months old with a single

restaurant, two employees and 12 students. I leave it with circa 60 employees. There are 34 training projects with an agreement and funding in place for another 44 training projects. The annual income of nearly £4 million will support more than 2,000 a year through training and into work.

I am looking forward to my new role as Managing Director of The Compass Academy for the Compass Group UK & Ireland.



The new project will be to set up a state-of-the-art training academy to train 9,000 Compass students a year for employment in hospitality and horticulture. A 135 bedroom hotel in the West Midlands, set in 11 acres of grounds, is being converted for the purpose. With the aim of increasing social mobility, the plan is to train another 2,000 students specifically recruited from the local area.

On a final note, thank you once again for all your vital support of our work to reduce reoffending. We could not do it without you. I remain a member of the Chaîne and look forward to seeing you sometime, somewhere.

Chris Moore

## A SURPRISE AWARD!

*The Food Service Catey’s Awards were held in September at the Park Plaza Hotel, London. Seventeen nominated awards were presented, but then two additional awards were made. Chris Moore, CEO of The Clink, was surprised and honoured to receive the final award of the evening for ‘an outstanding contribution to the hospitality industry’. This was timely recognition of his 11 years with the charity as he stepped down from his role there just months later. Congratulations, Chris!*

## SUSSEX DINNER AT THE RESTAURANT AT PALLANT HOUSE, CHICHESTER

Pallant House is a splendid, eighteenth-century town house in the Georgian quarter of Chichester. The restaurant is part of a tastefully designed modern annexe. This well-attended Sussex Bailliage dinner was their first event after the enforced break.

After delicious canapés, nicely washed down with an Italian Ca’ del Console Prosecco Extra Dry, the company was served flaked Sussex smoked mackerel with beetroot, pea, pickled vegetables and a micro herb salad with an orange and burnt butter dressing. The contra flavours of mackerel and beetroot fused together extremely well, and the dressing complemented both the vegetables and the salad. This clever starter dish was accompanied by an Argentinian white wine, Finca La Corona Torrontes, Norton.

The main was a fillet steak, cooked well on the outside but served pink, together with succulent potato dauphinoise and

wilted baby spinach. Surrounding this ensemble was a warm and most wonderful wild mushroom Diane sauce – providing, for some, a flavour and memories of days gone by. Also from Argentina, a quite full but clean-tasted Malbec, Lo Tengo was served. The chefs’ version of Italian Zabaglione flavoured with marsala, rhubarb and Sussex ginger crumb was the chilled dessert. A sweet-and-slightly-piquant-pot-of-indulgent-creamy-pudding-to-be-consumed-by-many-without-pause. An Italian Moscato d’Asti, Prunotto helped to save the palettes of those seeking an encore! Coffee, tea, and infusions were served with petits fours to round off an excellent evening.

Congratulations went to the chefs, to the front of house staff and to the management for another most enjoyable evening.

Neil Deverill





Vic Laws, Janet & Philip Evins and Marie Jones



## BAILLIAGE DE GRANDE BRETAGNE CELEBRATES ITS 61<sup>ST</sup> GRANDE CHAPITRE

It is a truth universally acknowledged that the County of Hampshire is known as 'Jane Austen Country' and that the port city of Southampton is 'Gateway to the World'. The Ageas 'Rose Bowl' Cricket Ground, home of Hampshire County Cricket, is not so universally well-known, but became the venue for the 61st Grand Chapitre of Chaîne GB.

By early October the cricket season had ended and the heavy rain over the weekend would certainly have stopped play. The official opening event, a Diner Amical, was held at 'Beefy's' Restaurant in the shelter and comfort of the Hilton Hotel. After a delay of two years, another Grand Chapitre was underway.

*'There were audible gasps of admiration as each deft, delicious course arrived'*

The first visit of the weekend set sail the next morning. The Red Funnel Ferry passed cruise liners, tankers, container ships and pleasure crafts as it ploughed its way across the Solent to Cowes, the renowned centre of sailing on the Isle of Wight. Osborne House,

the Italianate holiday home of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, was the tour's destination and an excellent overview of its history was delivered, enroute, by the Bailli of Solent, Andrew Crawford – an unexpected bonus. It was easy to see why the house, with its own extensive grounds and peaceful bay, became a precious royal retreat. Before the return ferry, there was a welcome stop for lunch at The Lifeboat restaurant. Few diners will forget the dessert: a rich and royal portion of moist chocolate gâteau.

The Harbour Hotel was the host for that evening's Welcome Dinner. Started with Ridgeview's Bloomsbury Brut and followed by one of Michelin-starred chef Alex Aitken's delightful seafood-based dinners – six light courses with six superb matching wines. Suddenly it was nearly midnight! Our thanks to GM Maître Hotelier Lukasz Dwornik and all of Alex's team.

The following morning an exceptionally busy Induction Ceremony was presided over by Bailli Délégué, Philip Evins and International Vice-President, Marie Jones. After reception drinks, weekend guests then spent the afternoon in various ways. Some visited Stonehenge – perhaps the world's most famous prehistoric World Heritage monument – and Salisbury Cathedral, founded in 1220 and best



known for its incomparable tower and spire, the tallest in England. Both 'shone' even on this wettest of afternoons and both visits were guided and enhanced by the expert knowledge of Cathedral Guide Officer Alex Armstrong.

Despite, the howling wind and thrashing rain, a group of members spent a fascinating afternoon (mostly inside) at the Hambledon Winery. Hambledon is England's oldest commercial vineyard, dating from 1952. At a banquet in Paris in 1973, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth served Hambledon wine to President Pompidou, upon Britain's entrance to the



The Blue Jasmine Brigade



EEC, enabled by the late Professional du Vin, Steven Spurrier. Passing to Ian Kellett in 1999, the estate continued in this pioneering spirit: installing the first Coquard press in the UK – instrumental in the production of quality sparkling wines. From its two hundred acres Hambledon produces upwards of 150,000 world class, classic method, sparkling bottles per year, using the same noble grapes varieties as Champagne. Three expressions were tasted all of which had a purity of fruit, driven by energetic effervescence. Bottles were purchased and loaded up before it was time to head back to prepare for the Gala Dinner.

Meanwhile a group of Wessex members led by Jill Welsh was busy arranging sapphire blue hydrangeas and foliage into beautiful centre pieces for the tables in the California Suite at The Vineyard Hotel at Stockcross. The stage was set for the Gala Dinner – a dinner which was simply superb. There were audible gasps of admiration as each deft, delicious course arrived.

The accompanying wines were from around the globe. Old friends were reunited, new friends were made and the close harmony songs, 40's style, of The Spitfire Sisters cabaret added to the upbeat atmosphere. Congratulations, very well-earned, went to Maître Rôtisseur Tom Scade, Maître Sommelier Romain Bourger and General Manager, Paul Shannon and their excellent teams.

As customary, a raffle was held in aid of The Clink, Chaîne GB's chosen charity. The aim of The Clink is to reduce reoffending rates by training prisoners and placing graduates in employment in the hospitality and horticultural industries. One of the prize winners was Denise Haverty. She and a friend subsequently spent a happy 24 hours at The Vineyard celebrating a birthday and enjoying 'a really brilliant raffle prize', with an à la carte dinner, a Sommelier-recommended choice of wines, and time in the Spa.



Tom Scade and the Brigade

And so, to the final event of the weekend – a Lunch Amical at The Blue Jasmine restaurant on the harbour front in Southampton where we were welcomed by the owners, Maître Restarateurs Xi and Danwei Zhao and Assistant GM William Tan.

Designed by Maître Rôtisseur Darren Liew this was a feast of Southeast Asian cuisine – all freshly, and beautifully served in elegant surroundings. Seventy two hours in the making and using ancient methods, the Sarawak black pepper roasted duck alone demonstrated the passion, care and precision infused into each part of this evocative menu. The golden Mango Botanic dessert served with Sauska, Tokaji Aszu, 5 Puttanyos 2013 and the joyful group photographs brought this Sunday lunch to a happy end. And for just a short while the sun shone.

For all the detail of organization, for all the wonderful organizers, volunteers, and attendees, there was still one vital ingredient missing from this Grand Chapitre – the dynamism of international members and their guests. There will be a warm welcome back for sure in Autumn 2022, when the 62nd Grand Chapitre takes place in the renowned University City of Oxford. Come rain or 'shine!

Janet Epton



Kim Finch and Robbie Nicholson



The Spitfire Sisters



Induction party



# Countrywide *with the Chaîne*

## WESSEX OMGD DINES AT THE GROSVENOR

Members of Wessex Bailliage did not actually travel to London for their OMGD Autumn event. This English-themed dinner was held more locally at The Grosvenor in the heart of Stockbridge, the smallest town in England. It was our first visit to this little gem which has recently undergone major renovations. Not so 'little' with 33 bedrooms and several members took advantage of the opportunity to stay overnight.

On arrival, we were served Canapés of Smoked Trout & Caviar, Scallop Cerviche and Devilled Duck Hearts, together with Coates and Seely Brut Reserve, in the Danebury. This was a delightful room with wood panelled walls, featuring many



Paul Smith John Lacombe, Neil Cooper and Philip Evins

famous racehorses from Stockbridge's racing past.

Taking its name from the 19th Century where the Stockbridge market was once held, dinner was served in the elegant Market Room. Chef, Neil Cooper had created a truly tasty Menu for us. Commencing with a Goats Cheese starter, Test Valley poached Trout followed and then a Venison Loin main course. A taster of English Cheese prepared the way

for a Passionfruit, Mango and White Chocolate Panna-cotta.

Everyone really enjoyed the evening. In keeping with the English theme, all courses were accompanied with English wines from English Vineyards including Coates and Seely, Danebury, Bolney and Hattingley Valley.

Christine Wallage

## ON DEEPEST, DARKEST DARTMOOR



Paul Smith, John Badley, Mark Godfrey and Keith Blackie

With a mile-long, narrow drive behind you, Gidleigh Park Hotel in Devon is a welcome sight on a cold, darkening November afternoon.

Hotelier Simon Franks welcomed members and guests of the South-West Bailliage into the warm, cosy, and already festive, wood-panelled lounge. A glass of Nyetimber Classic Cuvée accompanied the delicious canapés created by Chef Chris Eden.

Dinner was set beautifully in a private room and our starter, paired with a very fresh Chenin Blanc from Olifantsberg on the Western Cape SA, was a rich and creamy Crab and Scallop Mousse, set in a velvety spiced Pumpkin Velouté. Of course, the two complemented each other perfectly.

Chef Eden gave us another local delicacy, for the main course: glazed Short Rib of Devon Ruby Red Beef

served with barbeque Maitake Mushroom, Onion Fondant, Truffle and Nasturtium. Simon paired this rich, beefy dish with a fine Château Boutisse, St Emilion Grand Cru 2016 – a great match.

Dessert was all about the hotel's own bee hives. Honey Parfait, White Chocolate and Mead paired with a little sparkle of Moscato d'Asti, Nivole, Michele Chiarlo, Piedmont, Italy 2019, provided a fabulous finish to a delightful meal.

Hats off to the team who served us so professionally and to Chef Eden and his brigade who, sadly, would not say boo to the goose... \*roasters!

Mark Godfrey

\*Rôtisseurs



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## T'WAS A FEW WEEKS BEFORE CHRISTMAS...



Paul Smith, Matt Whitfield, Philip Evins and James Hiley-Jones

Was it the glass of mulled wine exchanged for a large, wet umbrella on arrival through the dark and winding gardens? The friendly smiles? The crackling, log fire? The strong hands delivering bags to the cosy, well-appointed bedroom? The carols on the radio? The expectation of a delicious dinner? Whatever the welcome recipe, the Montagu Arms at Beaulieu has become a firm, festive favourite with Wessex diners.

Garlanded for Christmas, the reception rooms sparkled as guests — equally sparkly in sequins, festive bow ties, and Chaîne regalia — gathered chatteringly over canapés and Crémant de Bourgogne, before the call to dinner.

The winding journey to the Montagu Arms takes you through the New Forest (watch out for the wild ponies) and almost down to the coast. The menu designed by Head Chef, Maître Rôtisseur, Matt Whitfield was evocative of the forest and the coast with intricate, well-portioned courses of South Coast Hake with seaweed, Black Water Pig Belly and Creedy Carver Duck with Tunworth Grape Chutney. Did we taste some Asian flavours there, as well as

the salty taste of the sea? How was that smooth slice of Salt Caramel and Malt Dark Chocolate so immaculately carved? This dessert was so well-matched with Late Harvest Viognier 2017 Valle Secreto.

Philip Evins had plenty of thanks and congratulations to say before the traditional *santé*. Quite apart from the artistry of the food, the service — quietly, well-orchestrated — was superb. The Montagu Arms is part of the Greenclose Hotels Group and an additional introduction was given to top table guest, director James Hiley-Jones. Several substantial prizes had been provided for the raffle. This was a fun diversion, but raised a seriously generous £1,000 for The Clink Charity.

Coffee, choux buns and chatter continued long after. It may have been our imaginations... or perhaps we really did hear a sleigh and a whistle and a 'Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!'

Janet Epton

## ASIAN INFLUENCES AT WHATLEY MANOR

The Cotswolds Bailliage returned to the elegant English manor house — Whatley Manor, near Malmesbury — for our September lunch. We were welcomed by the General Manager, Maître Hôte/Sue Williams.

The reception was held on a terrace, overlooking the beautiful gardens, where champagne was served with canapés of lobster and trout row cones, and tempura cauliflower with citrus glaze.

We moved into a private dining room to enjoy a delicious meal created and prepared by two Michelin-starred Chef Niall Keating, assisted by Rôtisseur Ricki Weston. Asian influences prevailed. We started with hand-dived scallops, avocado, radish, and soy

accompanied by a *Vino Verde* wine from Portugal. The main course featured lamb rump, fermented lettuce, horseradish and *ssamjang*, matched with a Cabernet Shiraz from McLaren Vale, Australia. Whilst a Botrytis Viognier from Barossa Valley, Australia was a perfect foil for the desert of Sudachi, white chocolate and milk foam.

We were delighted to be joined for this occasion by Philip Evins, Bailli Délégué, and his wife Janet, Conseiller Gastronomique. Philip proposed the *Santé du Chef et du Service*. The assembled team was fully deserving of the profuse thanks. Another outstanding event.

Alan Cox



Niall Keating and Sue Williams at the *Santé*

## SOLENT DINNER

at  
The Earl of March



The Earl of March, located in the southern reaches of the South Downs National Park, is a warm and welcoming establishment. A short walk across fields to the Downs, it is a mile North of Chichester.

A glass of Ashling Park Cuvé NV or Ashling Park Sparkling Rosé 2014 was welcome on arrival. Once seated for dinner, a Pressed Terrine of smooth Foie Gras and Confit Duck served with Sour Cherries — which both opposed and complemented the Foie Gras flavours — received positive comments. A Chilean Novas Gran Reserva Riesling Bio Bio Valley proved to be excellent company.

Next a fish course of Seared Scallop and Tempura Prawn with Bisque Foam, all presented in a large scallop shell. A smooth Domaine Papagiannakos Assyritiko Attiki from Greece matched well the flavours of the sea.

The main was Pan Roasted Breast of Local Pheasant and Partridge, Boulangerie Potato, Roasted Root Vegetables with a rich dark Game Madeira Jus. A dish perfect for a late Autumn evening and the accompanying Pinot Noir, a Domaine Valmoissine Louis Latour was rounded and smooth.

A tasty Tarte Tatin, with Sussex Apple and Blackberry for dessert, served with Bourbon Vanilla Ice Cream proved to be very popular, as did the glasses of Italian Palazzina Moscato d'Asti Piemonte served as the dessert wine.

As ever a splendid event hosted by Solent Vice-Conseiller Culinaire, Giles Thompson. We have come to expect excellent food and wine at The Earl of March, well deserving of a special thank you to both the kitchen and front of house staff. Bailli Andrew Crawford proposed the *santé*.

Neil Deverill





## THAMES VALLEY AT BROOKLANDS MUSEUM

Autumn came and the Thames Valley Baillage held their first event since lockdown. 30 members & guests visited Brooklands Museum of motoring and aviation for lunch at this iconic setting. It was lovely to meet up with old friends and enjoy hospitality.

## NEW APPOINTMENTS

*Congratulations*

### JOHN WIGG APPOINTED AS BAILLI OF SOLENT

John Wigg has been appointed as the new Bailli of the Solent Baillage. A long career in publishing and marketing — primarily within the hospitality sector — has helped him appreciate the complexities as well as the rewards of running a successful restaurant or hotel. The excellent support that the Chaîne provide to both individuals and establishments alike, is just one of the reasons why he is so pleased to be a very active member of the organisation.

Together with his late wife, Jacqui, John initially joined Wessex Baillage but, when the South-West Baillage was reformed under the guidance of good friend Mark Godfrey, they chose to support him locally. However, a move to West Sussex some four years ago put Solent Baillage on the doorstep. This proved to be a welcoming and enjoyable transition.



'In my ten or so years with the Chaîne I am pleased to say that there have been many pleasant and unexpected surprises. However, none of these came even close to the moment when Philip Evins called, completely out of the blue, to enquire whether I would be prepared to take over as Bailli of the Solent Baillage! I was, of course, delighted to accept.'

John continues: 'It is a great honour to be considered capable of taking on the role of Bailli that Andrew Crawford, our outstanding, dedicated leader of eleven years, has performed with such seemingly effortless and charismatic style. I look forward very much to my term in office and to continuing to enjoy the excellent company, friendship and support of my fellow Solent members.'

We warmly congratulate John on his appointment.

### TIM SPENCER TO LEAD LONDON CITY BAILLIAGE

At the beginning of the month Tim took over the reins from Martin Vestergaard as Bailli, London City. Hailing from Johannesburg, Tim has enjoyed a successful career in Hospitality Management for over three decades, both at home in South Africa and internationally in Singapore, the Maldives, and the Americas. He has worked with and consulted for groups such as Sun International, Southern Sun, Ritz-Carlton, One and Only, Three Cities, First Group ZA and Royal Palm Asset Management. Tim's passion for the industry started early on in his career, as a founding Member of the Graduate Management Trainee Programme with Sun International. His hospitality leadership and mentoring skills have underpinned



his commitment to developing young and aspiring hospitality professionals.

Both he and his wife Lauren were active Chaîne members in South Africa, before transferring their membership to London when they moved to the UK in 2018.

Tim is currently the General Manager of the Double Tree by Hilton, London Kensington. He looks forward to helping host Chaîne activities in the hotel, as well as extending the range of involvement of professional establishments with the Chaîne and with our young professionals' competitions.

Now Tim has taken on this role, the running of the Baillage truly will be a team affair as Lauren is already Vice Argentier for the Baillage.



# CHAPLIN, CHURCHILL, AND CHILTERNS AT CLIVEDEN HOUSE HOTEL & SPA



After the lockdown and the difficulties of the last 18 months, this was the Chilterns third attempt at lunching at the celebrated Cliveden House Hotel. Dining in unrivalled exclusivity, we knew it was worth it.

The 'party' history of the house makes it the perfect spot for a celebration over fine food and wine. For over 350 years, the elite have entertained at Cliveden. We joined the likes of Chaplin, Churchill, Lennon, and Lawrence. Our lunch was in the renowned French Dining Room made famous by Churchill and President Roosevelt.

Many of those names must have also taken drinks, like us, on the terrace overlooking the extensive grounds. The 'Butlers talk' about the

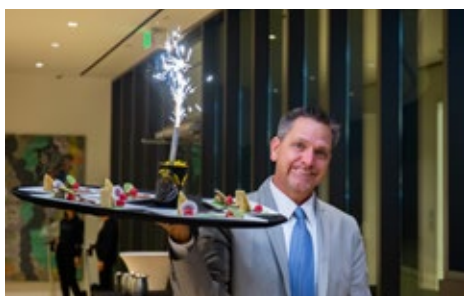
history of Cliveden recalled many of the great stories. And, as the rich and famous before us, we ate from an excellent menu and drank fine, well-paired wines.

The lunch was a sell-out with 50 people attending. My wife Jenny Quinn, Vice-Chancellor, and David Cotton, Vice-Echanson welcomed everyone and ensured that everything was done in the traditional Chaîne manner. Due to illness, I was not able to attend, but hearing all the enthusiastic reports I know we shall be planning another visit to Cliveden again very soon.

Barney Quinn



## A 40TH ANNIVERSARY for the Naples Bailliage



Dave Wilson



Roger Baker, Sandi Moran, Lacey King, Jeanette Boucher and Paula Baker

Naples Bailliage in South-West Florida has long enjoyed a strong association with Chaîne GB, with members regularly crossing the Atlantic in both directions to attend events. Prior to the Pandemic, many Naples members attended Chaîne GBs 60th Anniversary in London in 2019.

In November the Bailliage, one of the largest in the US, celebrated its 40th Anniversary with a spectacular dinner at the Artis Centre in Naples. Happily, as travel restrictions to the US were lifted just a week prior to the event, Philip and Janet Evins were able to make the trip and join many friends in celebrating this milestone. At the dinner were four previous Baillis: Jeanette Boucher, Lacey King, Sandi Moran and Roger Baker, and during the evening Tim Herman was inducted as the next Bailli. Between them these Baillis have given us a wonderful range of really high quality, memorable events. Bravo!





## GUSBOURNE ESTATE

Gusbourne Estate dates back to 1410, when it was owned by John de Goosebourne, whose coat of arms still hangs from the beams in the Norman church in neighbouring Appledore Village. Our vineyards in Kent are intersected by a small stretch of the Saxon Shore Way, the 153 mile walking route from Gravesend in north Kent to Hastings in East Sussex, a stretch of land, in the far South Eastern corner of England, that rings with history.

Here Julius Caesar began the Romans' first exploration of Ancient Britain, and St Augustine landed to bring Christianity to the Anglo-Saxons, as the first Archbishop of Canterbury. The Saxon Shore Way footpath follows the coastline exactly as it was in Roman times, before the reclamation of tracts of land from Folkestone to Romney Marsh and Rye. In 2004, when Andrew Weeber planted the first vines on Gusbourne Estate's coastal escarpment in Kent, he had a clear vision and a single goal: to create English Sparkling Wines that would stand up alongside the very finest offerings from across the globe.

Focusing on just the classic grape varieties of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier, we believe that the only way to ensure the quality of our grapes is to grow them ourselves. That is why the grapes used in our winemaking are sourced solely from Gusbourne vineyards.

Our vineyards are blessed with a very special terroir: our Wealden clay-loam soils in Kent, combined with an exceptionally warm and dry maritime climate, enables beautiful ripeness in our grapes. Our proximity to the sea provides a distinctive salty tang to the wines. In Sussex, our vineyards enjoy slightly higher altitudes and flinty chalk soils which brings a signature freshness to these grapes.

Jon Pollard, our Chief Vineyard Manager, helped to plant those first vines in 2004

and has been with us ever since. Jon and his team tend our vines with great care and attention to the environment, using only organic fertilisers. Over half of the vines planted are Burgundian, rather than the more widely used Champagne clones. Burgundian clones tend to produce lower yields and the resultant fruit is riper and has significantly more flavour, bringing more body and intensity to our wines.

With over 40 clones of the three varietals planted throughout our vineyards, we are able to identify many different blocks that we can hand-pick separately, and vinify separately, leaving us with upwards of 250 different base wines to blend our cuvées.

With his winemaking team, Professional du Vin Charlie Holland, our Head Winemaker, creates exceptional wines by painstakingly blending these base wines to create our final cuvées; each of which have their own character. All our wines are from a single vintage, each vintage a unique expression of the individual growing season — presenting an authentic reflection of a time and place.

Charlie believes, 'A vintage is all about the expression of the conditions we encounter in a given year. For 2021, with our cooler UK summer, we are expecting wines that are more structured, more precise and completely authentic to our terroir. There is a story, a fingerprint, an imprint... and we celebrate that.'

With nearly 20 years of winemaking experience, Charlie has worked in some of the best wine producing regions around the world including stints in Australia, New Zealand, Germany, France and the USA. Charlie returned to the thriving UK wine industry in 2009, and has been Head Winemaker at Gusbourne since 2013.

Sommelier Laura Rhys, our Global Ambassador and a Master Sommelier, joined Gusbourne in 2015 and works closely with

Charlie and the winemaking team — both at blending and throughout the winemaking process. Laura, a winner of the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs Young Sommelier of the Year Competition in 2008, spent nearly 20 years working in restaurants and was first attracted to Gusbourne and the wines whilst Head Sommelier at La Trompette, in London.

'The wines work so well on wine lists' she says, 'both as an aperitif or as a match to food. One of the most rewarding parts of my role at Gusbourne is discovering and showcasing wonderful food pairings with the wines.'

Today, we supply leading restaurants in the UK and abroad such as Core, Mere, The Fat Duck, and L' Enclume. The wines can be found at esteemed retailers including Berry Bros. & Rudd, Harvey Nichols and Fortnum & Mason as well as at many independent, specialist wine merchants. Our wines are also served in the Royal Households.

Our cellar door, The Nest, in Appledore, is open year-round for tours, tastings and self-guided vineyard walks.

Laura Rhys



Duncan Palmer is back in town, after more than forty years of travelling the globe to create and run luxury hotels. It has been — and still is — a stellar career. Fiona Campbell caught up with him last month in the warm, art deco Gatsby's Bar at The Beaumont in the heart of Mayfair, where he has been MD since April. 'It has been a breathtaking, rollercoaster ride of a life', he explains, 'but it was time to come home'.

#### So, what are you doing now?

'I am overseeing a major £35 million extension, due to complete in 2023, for the new owners. It will take in the property next door and add 29 bedrooms and several private function rooms.

First of all, we had just 100 days to entirely refurbish all the public rooms before the doors were opened again after lockdown. But everyone pulled together, and we managed to complete ten days early. Although furloughed, all the staff were kept on full wages, so we were able to open with our full team of 140 — and the hotel has been at capacity ever since.'

#### Tell us how you got into hospitality, and the early days of your career.

'I am part of a large family, and we all enjoyed travelling and eating out. As a boy I was fascinated by food and wine service and how it was all put together. So, after school in Cambridge, I went to Westminster College to specialise in gastronomy.'

After graduating, Duncan joined Trusthouse Forte. From Browns in London, he went to the big 420-room Dubai International before moving to the Mandarin Oriental Group. 'I was promoted to Food and Beverage Manager at the new Mandarin Oriental in Macau, and given eight — yes, eight! — restaurants to open all on the same day, co-ordinating with the hotel's Grand Opening. And I was aged just 23...

'I stayed in the Far East for twelve years with the Mandarin Oriental Group — first in Macau and then Manila and Bangkok. Finally, still only 29, I was given my first General Manager role, for the 450-room Mandarin Oriental in Jakarta. I was very young, but equally very fortunate, to have such major responsibility'

#### You've criss-crossed the world as a hotelier. How did that happen?

'I thought I was settled in Asia, but then London lured me back. Ramon Pajares, Managing Director of the Savoy Group at the time, persuaded me to return to run The Savoy, which was going through a £25 million restoration programme. I owe so much to Ramon. Not only was I back home, but that move put me on a new path — that of creating and managing major refurbishments from the initial designs to the final investment.'

And so it continued. Three years later, Duncan became GM at The Connaught,



*'On the grill' with:*

## Duncan Palmer

### Managing Director, The Beaumont, Mayfair

Quietly spoken, elegant and unassuming, Duncan Palmer is a power-house in the world of international luxury hotels. Now he is working his magic on The Beaumont, a discreet and very English classic hotel, quietly tucked away off Grosvenor Square.



another classic London hotel undergoing major updating and renovation. After four years there, he returned to the Far East — to The Sukhothai in Bangkok, to develop the strategy and design aspects of the hotel's four-acre expansion.

'I was becoming known as someone who was not afraid of taking on these vast international projects and was gaining experience and vision with each new challenge. So, when the Langham Group asked me to come back to London, as MD of their flagship hotel, to create the entire redevelopment programme, naturally I jumped at the chance.'

Duncan worked for the Langham Group

for many years, taking on more and more responsibility for planning, interior design, refurbishment and operations development for the Langham Hotels in Hong Kong, Chicago, Shenzhen and Jakarta. He finally returned to the Langham, London to put the finishing touches to that massive renovation he had begun nine years before.

'That was quite a brief — and quite a dog-eared passport by the end!'

#### And what do you think those huge projects taught you?

'Efficiency, creativity and the courage to be bold. I was lucky enough to work with some of the best designers in the world. They taught me how to think big — to lay out the space, get the lighting right, consider the atmosphere, look at the best food concepts, and create a place where guests will feel comfortable — and keep on coming back'.

Four years ago, Duncan took on the complete renovation and repositioning of The Murray, an old Government building in Hong Kong. 'As MD, I had to oversee everything from managing the whole refurb to the hiring of staff, marketing and sales. I'm happy to say that The Murray is now a top-end luxury hotel, winning international accolades.

#### So, what does membership of the Chaîne mean to you?

Now Vice Chargé de Missions Honoraire with the Chaîne UK, Duncan has been an active member of the organisation in many countries. 'It's a great professional network wherever you are — and a marvellous way to meet like-minded 'end users'. There are wonderful opportunities to go to different events, and now that I am in the latter part of my career, there is more time to enjoy them'

#### Apart from The Colony Grill Room at the Beaumont, what is your favourite restaurant?

'There are two. In the hotel world, it just has to be Hélène Darroze at The Connaught for what she has achieved and, on a personal level, Hakkasan. Its Asian atmosphere reminds me of everything I love about the Far East.'

#### And if you and your wife Gloria were on a desert island, what would your menu be, and who would cook it?

Without a doubt, that would be Michel Roux Jnr, and I would ask for a big plate of seared scallops — one of his specialities — with a glass or two of Puligny Montrachet. Then Filet de Boeuf en Croute, stuffed with truffles and foie gras, and a bottle of Château Palmer '82 — with the last glass saved for one of Michel's classic soufflés. The cheese-based Soufflé Suisse for preference.

Fiona Campbell



# 62<sup>ND</sup> 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 to learn more about 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 Waddesdon Manor. This fabulous house was built in the Neo-renaissance style of a French château, between 1874 and 1889, for Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild. Originally nothing but farmland, the Baron wanted a country retreat built in the style of a Loire

châteaux and soon engaged the French architect Gabriel-Hippolyte Destailleur. It was created as a place to entertain guests at Ferdinand's famous 'Saturday to Monday' house parties. Over the years the family have assembled an amazing collection of internationally renowned art, from paintings to ceramics. The cellars now hold over 10,000 bottles, documenting 150 years of the Rothschild family's ownership of two of the most famous Bordeaux vineyards, Château Lafite Rothschild and Château Mouton Rothschild.

We will have the privilege of dining in two famous Colleges. 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 at The Old Bank Hotel, the Cherwell Boathouse and Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons.

Finally, a very special and memorable venue – St Marys, the University College Church – is planned for members wishing to be inducted,

We look forward with hope to welcoming all members, national and international, to this 62nd Grand Chapitre.



## Diary Dates

Make a note of these dates in your diary.

Young Sommelier Competition,  
London  
5 April 2022

Young Chef Competition,  
Leatherhead  
7-8 April 2022

World Chaîne Day  
2 April 2022

Young Professionals Awards Dinner,  
London  
6 May 2022

OMGD Winemaker Dinner, London  
24 June 2022

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

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



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