

Goustevin 50th Anniversary Celebrations in Rouen (November 2017)

by Ormond Smith

Charles de Gaulle Airport – Thursday 16th November.....we've arrived! From various departure points, members of Goustevin Scotland joined up for the onward journey to Rouen and an exciting programme of events to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of La Confrerie des Compagnons Goustevin do Normandie. Connetable Nicol with Ormond Smith and Christina Cameron met up with Angus and Anne-Marie Meldrum ; David McAllister (fresh from his investiture of the MBE by HM The Queen) and Marjorie Maule and the Scots were joined by Dan and Doris Weisman from Indianapolis who had just completed their visits to wine regions of Germany and France. A chartered coach took the party into Paris for the rail journey to Rouen and Hotel Gustav Flaubert just off the Vieux Marché for the weekend. Having met up with a sizeable contingent from Zeltingen in the Mosel and Ed Koolish and Karen Warner from Indianapolis who had been visiting the Normandy beaches and Mont St Michel, a pleasant dinner accompanied by Beaujolais Villages Nouveau, was enjoyed in **La Tavola** just around the corner from the hotel before the wearied travellers "hit the sack" !

A bright Friday morning dawned and we were joined for breakfast by Dick Beach who had arrived from a sojourn in Jerez in Spain and our friend from Donzere, Francoise Chalbet, prior to the group departing for Dieppe for a day long visit. The feudal



A sunny Dieppe from the Chateau esplanade

Chateau de Dieppe sits on the promontory above the town and its origins date back to 1188, only to be destroyed in 1195 and rebuilt in 1433. Now classed as an historic monument, it houses a museum, including an important carved ivory collection and art gallery and proved to be most interesting. Following a light lunch alongside the marina, the group boarded a sight-seeing cruise along the Normandy

coast where the famed white chalk cliffs proved to be anything but, being heavily discoloured by mud slides and mineral stains. We returned to Rouen for a "quick brush up" before enjoying a cocktail reception hosted by the Best Western Gustav Flaubert Hotel in the lobby and then being whisked by coach to **Chateau de la Marquise** at Oissel to



Dick Beach presents judgement on the Kir Royale!

the south of Rouen. Here, members of the Magistral had laid on a sumptuous Welcome Dinner for the foreign delegates, preceded by plate after plate of amuse bouches (or "amuse gueules" since we were in France!) and a wee glass or two of champagne or Kir Royale if you preferred. The dinner itself was excellent and the evening was enhanced by the entertainment, a classically trained soprano who rendered a variety of songs, some classical and some more modern and accompanied by her husband on electric piano.



Beautiful coral formations on the Great Barrier Reef

The following morning saw us “take the air” as we walked down to the Seine for a visit to **Panorama XXL**, a 360° giant photographic image of the Great Barrier Reef capturing the diversity of coral and aquatic plants and animals.....turtles, sea stars, shoals of fish not to mention sharks ! Quite a change from last year’s images of 15th century Rouen at the time of Joan of Arc, but nevertheless just as enthralling.

A relaxed lunch and afternoon heralded the evenings **Chapitre at the Casino de Bonsecours**, situated on the escarpment overlooking Rouen. Among the inductees was our American friend Ed Koolish who was initiated as an Ecuyer (much to his

surprise as Karen had secretly put him forward but he did wonder why he was seated on his own on the front row!) and our own David McAllister who was promoted to the rank of Chevalier.....our congratulations to both.

The Gala Dinner which followed was rated as one of the best menus experienced in Rouen over many years and was much enjoyed by all, starting with the numerous and tasty amuse gueules with champagne from the house of Alain Bailly. Once seated, the opening course, **Lobster served with Chanterelle Mushrooms in a Cream Sauce** was well received as was the accompanying wine, a “**2014 Mersault**”. The main course was **Supreme of Chicken stuffed with Mushroom Fungi, nuggets of Fois Gras sitting on a Parmesan encrusted Potato base with a mini kebab of vegetables.....**imaginative and satisfying as was the **2012 Chateau Gloria** from St Julien which was much enjoyed,



The "50th Anniversary" cake is presented with a fanfare from the band

although the writer felt that it was perhaps a touch austere for the Chicken. The **Plateau of Fine Cheeses** was twinned with a “**2014 Côte Rôtie**” from the Rhone house of Duclaux and the Dinner was completed with a **Praline** accompanied by a stunning “**2013 Premier Grand Cru Classé Sauternes**”. On completion of the Dinner, Grand Connetable Christian Pellenc welcomed all the confreres and recounted the past history of the Confrerie, the efforts of the early Grand Connetables to establish the brotherhood and in particular the work done by Michel Goulon over some twenty years as Grand Connetable in promoting the Goustevin into what we enjoy today. Accompanied by a fanfare from the band, the “50th Anniversary cake was triumphantly taken into the function suite and then Connetable Nicol presented Christian with the present of the Anniversary Quich on behalf of Goustevin Scotland. The Gala Dinner culminated with dancing into the wee sma’ hours.

Our appreciation for a memorable evening goes to Sonia Leroy, Joel Laurent, Christian Legard and other members of the Grand Conseil. A fitting 50th anniversary celebration indeed !!