25TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

14TH NOVEMBER 2026

by Ormond Smith

Doesn't time fly past…….it just does not seem so long ago that twelve members of Goustevin Scotland donned ceremonial robes and were inducted as members of the Conseil Magistral d'Écosse, in a ceremony in the Great Hall of the Inverness Town House. These appointments would enable prospective members of the Goustevin to be inducted in Inverness, rather than have to travel to Rouen in France which had traditionally been the norm. A quarter of a century later, it seemed only fitting to celebrate this occasion, which coincided with the appointment of new members to the Conseil Magistral, replacing members who had sadly passed on or retired and in so doing, bringing younger members of the Goustevin into the management team. The prestigious Ness Walk Hotel on the banks of the river was selected as the venue and by acclamation "they did us proud!".

Much planning had gone into the preparation for the dinner, entailing food sampling and much time spent on wine selection and suitability…….the Events Committee's efforts were not in vain! From a number of areas of the country, some forty members and guests got the evening under way with a Champagne (a **Devaux Brut N.V. Blanc de Noirs –** 100% Pinot Noir, rich in style with some brioche toastiness – very moreish!!) and canapés reception before being invited to take their seats for the ceremony and the following dinner. Then, to the stirring sounds of the Grand March from Aida, the enrobed Connetable Nicol and three Conseil members entered the function suite and took their places. Following an introduction by the Connetable, welcoming all to the function and outlining the purpose of the circumstances, Duncan Chisholm Jnr was promoted to the rank of Baron so that he became eligible to become a member of the Conseil Magistral d'Écosse. Following the induction ceremony, the Connetable welcomed the following members to the Conseil, Christina Cameron (becoming Chambellan), Duncan Chisholm Jnr (becoming Maître de Bouche), Caroline Duncan (becoming Maître de Cave), David McAllister (becoming Bailli) and Jean Slater (becoming Maître du Palais), whereupon they were presented with their insignia tartan collarettes. Connetable Nicol then invited Ecuyer Reverend Hugh Watt to say Grace.



Connetable Nicol gets proceedings under way



The newly inducted members of the Conseil

Following Grace, the photographic slideshow was started, being screened on a very large TV. This had been put together by the Goustevin webmaster Baron Brian Forsyth and featured photographs covering Goustevin events both in Scotland and on visits to overseas chapters and tours between 2001 and the present. To say that it evoked interest would be quite an understatement! It ran throughout the evening allowing diners to fully appreciate and enjoy the memories displayed.

The entrée to the celebratory dinner was a **Tartare of Cured Salmon with Crème Fraiche, Pickled Cucumber and Dill**, well presented and truly succulent, and this was accompanied by a **2024 Riesling d'Alsace, "Cuvée René Dopff",** from **Dopff & Irion**, based in the charming town of

Riquewihr. Lively, fresh and balanced with complex mineral characteristics and a long, fruity finish, a delightful wine with which to get the dinner under way. René Dopff is credited as a key figure in modernizing the region of Alsace in the 20th Century and putting it on the viticultural map through reducing yields, creating the now classic labels and recognising the importance of matching a grape variety with the correct soil and terroir. The tasting room is on its original site in the historic and charming village of Riquewihr, widely thought of as one the prettiest villages in France with beautiful scenery and chocolate box houses.

Prior to the arrival of the main course, Connetable Nicol invited Caroline Duncan, our new Maître de Cave to give a discourse on the selection of wines being presented throughout the dinner, which she duly delivered in her own inimitable style.

On completion of the discourse, the main course of the dinner was served, a **Fillet of Aberdeen Angus Beef,** presented with **Mushroom Duxelles, Mushroom Ketchup, Chantenay Carrot, Green Beans, Duchesse Potato** on a **red wine jus.** A well presented dish, the beef was tender and the accompanying ingredients harmonised perfectly…….and with a glass of **2023 Eva Pemper Pinot Noir Reserve** from **Marlborough, New Zealand** to hand, a perfect pairing! The wine had rich aromas of dark cherries and plums, complemented by smoky, earthy notes – the palate is full bodied and densely layered with finely structured tannins. Eva Pemper is originally from Croatia and having gained a Masters Degree in winemaking in Zagreb, she took time off and went travelling around the world, found South Island in New Zealand and the rest is history, as they say. There is a proud Croatian presence in New Zealand winemaking going back some 100 years and their influence is telling. The Eva Pemper winery is based in Blenheim in Marlborough and the grapes are sourced from vineyards in the Lower Wairau Valley right at the foot of the Wither Hills.

Connetable Nicol then invited guest speaker David McAllister MBE to address the floor and this he did with a most informative appraisal of the wine and spirit business in Scotland over many years, many smaller companies being bought over by the bigger names, like Tennant Caledonian Brewers, of which David was Scottish Sales Director as well as with the much respected J.G. Thomson (The Vaults) Leith. He spoke about the many changes in the wine trade, how well known brand names of often inferior wines like Liebfraumilch, Blue Nun, Black Tower and so on are perhaps thankfully no longer with us, their places being taken by producers of much higher quality wines as the standards and requirements for good, customer friendly products was found to be a necessity. He praised the Goustevin for their efforts in educating wine enthusiasts over the years through their many and varied tastings and ended his talk with a request to the floor to join him in a toast to the Confrérie des Compagnons Goustevin de Normandie, to give the organisation its full and proper name.



David McAllister MBE

The Vote of Thanks was most capably given by Ecuyer Ian Johnston.

Following appreciative applause from the members and guests, the dessert was served, a **Cardamom Crème Brulée,** with a **Granny Smith Apple Jelly and Calvados Sorbet** (delicious) and this was accompanied by a **2021 Jurançon Château Jolys Cuvée Jean** from **Domaine Michel Boutin.** This wine is from an historic wine region of France located in the foothills of the Pyrenees near the city of Pau, the renowned vineyard being purchased by this Canadian/Quebecois in 2019. Made with Petit Manseng grapes, the intense nose exhibits nuances of apricot, pineapple and passionfruit, carried onto the well balanced, complex and creamy palate…….in the writers opinion, a wine to be savoured! Rounding off this special dinner was the **Tain Cheddar Cheese Dish** with **Malt Loaf, Pickled Walnut**

and a **Plum & Apple Relish**…….very satisfying, as was the accompanying wine, a **2000 Warre Vintage Port,** characteristically elegant, full bodied with a firm finish from powerful tannins. Concentrated fruits, well integrated alcohol with a spicy, peppery sweetness made this the perfect wine to round off what had been a splendid repast. Warre's flagship estate, **Quinta da Cavadinha** is situated in the Pinhão Valley on the famed Douro River, a veritable treasure-trove of quality Port producing quintas. The vineyards are part of the Symington portfolio, founded by Scotsman Andrew James Symington in the early 19th century and the Symington's unmatched experience acquired over the centuries affords a special understanding of the Douro vineyards as well as an unrivalled expertise. It is worth noting that Warre's is 100% owned by the Symington family and along with the family's other firms, it is the only Port producer of British origin in the hands of a single family. What a wine to round off an outstanding and memorable dinner.

There only remained the coffee and petits fours and animated conversations before "carriages were summoned". A most memorable evening and the Goustevin's appreciation to not only manager Kevin Staines and his staff of the Ness Walk Hotel for their professionalism and attention to detail, and also to Chef de Cuisine Gérard Chouet and Sous Chef Manuel Soloman for their presentation of a most memorable dinner menu to grace our 25th Embassy celebration. What an experience!

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Wines as presented were :-

Devaux Brut N.V. Blanc de Noirs Champagne - available from Majestic Wines, Inverness

Cuvée René Dopff Riesling d'Alsace – available from Great Grog, Edinburgh

Eva Pemper Pinot Noir Reserve – available from Great Grog, Edinburgh

Chateau Jolys Cuvée Jean Jurançon – available from Waitrose on-line

Warre Vintage Port 2000 – available from Davy's Wine Merchants, London

For Great Grog enquiries, or indeed advice on any of the other wines, contact Caroline Duncan
caroduncan75@hotmail.com








The 25th Anniversary Dinner Menu



La Confrérie des Compagnons Goustevin de Normandie
www.goustevinscotland

Dinner
to mark and celebrate
25 years as an Embassy
in the Ness Walk Hotel Inverness
on
Saturday 14th November 2026

Prior to the dinner
a short induction ceremony was held to promote
Duncan M Chisholm to the rank of Baron
then to appoint him to the Conseil Magistral d'Ecosse
along with Christina Cameron, Duncan Chisholm jnr,
Caroline Duncan, David McAllister and Jean Slater

Chairman: J Nicol Manson, OBE Connetable & Ambassadeur
Grace: Écuyer - The Rev Hugh Watt
Wine discourse: Noble Dame - Caroline Duncan
Guest speaker: Baron - David McAllister MBE
Vote of thanks: Ecuyer Ian Johnston

Our motto: Good food, good wine and good company

The Wines

Champagne Devaux Brut N.V. Blanc de Noirs
Made from 100% Pinot Noir, this is made in an unusual way for Champagne, with reserve wines drawn from two solera systems dating back to 1995 and 2002. It's rich in style with mellow red berry fruits, ripe red apple and some brioche toastiness. Tart acidity keeps it fresh. Dosage: 7.8g/L. Devaux is located in the heart of the Cote des Bar Champagne sub-region.

Riesling D'Alsace 2024
Complex mineral characteristics with apple, pear and citrus. Lively, fresh and balanced, long fruity persistence and mineral flavours.

Eva Pemper Pinot Noir Reserve 2023
Hawkes Bay, New Zealand
Rich aromas of dark cherries and plums are complemented by smoky, earthy notes. The palate is full-bodied and densely layered, showing forest floor complexity and finely structured tannins.

Jurançon 2021
Cuvee Jean, Château Jolys
Domaine Michel Boutin
Made with the Petit Manseng grapes, intense nose, complex and creamy on the palate with exceptional balance. Notes of apricot, pineapple and passionfruit.

Warre Vintage Port 2000
Characteristically elegant, full bodied with a firm finish from powerful tannins. With concentrated fruits and well-integrated alcohol with a spicy, peppery sweetness.

"abusus non tollit usum"

Menu

Tartare of Cured Salmon
Crème Fraiche with Pickled Cucumber and Dill

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Fillet of Aberdeen Angus Beef
Mushroom Duxelles - Mushroom Ketchup
Chantenay Carrot - Green Beans
Duchesse Potato - Red Wine Jus

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Cardamom Crème Brulée
Apple Jelly – Granny Smith & Calvados Sorbet

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Tain Cheddar
Malt Loaf – pickled walnut –
Plum and apple relish

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Coffee, Tea or Decaff
Petits Fours

Chef de Cuisine – Gérard Chouet
Sous Chef – Manuel Soloman

Goustelin Scotland
at home and abroad



Above - a visit to Alsace, the European Parliament and The Confrérie de St Etienne d'Alsace during the International Grand Chapter in 2012

Programme January – May 2027
Saturday 9th January 7pm
New Year Drinks party at the Manson's

Sunday 21st February
Paella with a Twist - Lunch & Wine at la Tortilla 12.30pm

Saturday 8th May
International Grand Chapter and Civic Reception at Inverness Town House followed by Gala Dinner with entertainment at Kingsmills Hotel Inverness

Conseil Magistral 2001-2025m



The first Conseil Magistral d'Écosse (CME), on the recommendation of Nicol Manson, the first Connetable en Ecosse, was appointed by the Grand Conseil Magistral at a ceremony in Inverness Town Hall on 6th October 2001. This preceded the first Grand Chapitre conducted solely by the CME prior to a gala dinner in the Newton Hotel, Nairn.

With the exception of Beverley Manson retiring through ill health in 2014 and the retiral of Gordon Macrae in 2023, the CME remained unchanged until the untimely deaths of Dick Beach and Heather Sheerin in 2025. They are greatly missed. The CME had already been aware of the need to introduce younger members and these unexpected changes accelerated the requirement.

Accordingly, tonight, at the 25th Anniversary Celebration of elevation to Embassy status, it is appropriate that a transitional process begins with the appointment of four replacement members – two from the younger generation plus two loyal, longstanding members.

The membership of the Conseil Magistral d'Ecosse for admin of our Embassy and ceremonial roles, from 2026 for a transitional period of 3 years or so is:

Connetable & Ambassador - Nicol Manson
Porte-Cep - Sue Preece — Chanceler - James Sheerin
Chamberlain – Christina Cameron — Bailli – David McAllister
Echanson – Bobby Mackay — Narrateur – Dimond Smith
Maitre de Cave – Caroline Duncan — Maitre de Bouche - Duncan Chisholm Jnr
Maitre du Palais - Jean Slater