

Indianapolis Chapitre & Gala Dinner

by Ormond Smith

Whilst the prime purpose of our trip to Indianapolis was to celebrate the first International Chapitre and Gala Dinner of Goustevin Indianapolis, the Conseil Magistral of Indy under Connetable Giles Hoyt and ably assisted by Dan Weisman (and respective wives Delores and Doris) had organised a most imaginative week long programme for the visitors, a full report of which can be read under "[Goustevin Visit to Indianapolis 2015](#)".

Having enjoyed our afternoon at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum (well worth a visit if you are ever on holiday in that area of the US) we returned to our hotel for a quick "wash & brush up" and into our formal attire for the Chapitre & Gala Dinner of Goustevin Indianapolis – this would be held in the winery of Charles Thomas (www.chateauthomas.com) on the south side of the city. Charles is a previous Connetable of Goustevin Indy and has developed this winery from its inception in 1984, crafting wines in old world, French tradition, using grapes grown on America's west coast and now produces some 15,000 cases of wine annually from 50 grape varieties, matured in French barrels – an impressive achievement from what was initially a hobby! The winery has doubled in size over the years and now features as well as a retail and large gift shop, a 4,000 sq. foot banqueting room on the upper level, appropriately named the Vineyard Room, and this impressively laid out hall with its adjacent and conveniently sized ante-room would be the venue for the function.



The Induction Ceremony in Full Swing

To the sound of bagpipes, the Indianapolis Conseil Magistral entered the ante-room, followed by Grand Maitre des Ambassades Manuel Chanavaz from Rouen and the three members of Conseil d'Ecosse, Connetable Nicol Manson, James Sheerin and Ormond Smith. The piper was from the resident Indianapolis Motor Speedway "Indianapolis 500 Gordon Pipers-Horse Shoe Pipes and Drums" and he was to play a selection of marches and airs during the Gala Dinner later. The function was, by comparison to European events, quite small with some 40 attending but one has to understand that unlike the other Goustevins with members from

different walks of life, the Indy organisation is primarily that of a medical foundation with members all specialising in differing aspects of medicine. Perhaps consequently, the number of inductions/promotions was also lower and as well as one new member, their Narrateur Pamela Steed was promoted to Baroness (Noble Dame) while the Baron d'Honneur was none other than the

chef and owner of Chef Josephs restaurant (where we dined sumptuously on the Friday), Joseph Heidenreich. Having been piped out and disrobed, we retired to the Vineyard Room for the pre-dinner reception, to be followed by an all American menu and wines.



Stirring Tunes from the Piper

Following the reception the opening course of the Gala Dinner, the appetisers, consisted of Jambalaya Boats, Oysters Rockefeller, Andouille Sausage Canapés and Muffuletta (key Google if you are curious!), accompanied by a rather pleasant 2007 Sparkling Brut from the Gruet Winery in



Our table awaits.....

Albuquerque, New Mexico (a blend of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay), crisp, full bodied and displaying apple and grapefruit flavours and the discourse on these savouries and the wine (all from the Deep South) was given by Conseil Bailli Tom Nasser. Connetable Giles then “held the floor” with a discourse on the geography, history, cuisine and wines of New England which led into the soup course of New England Clam Chowder to be enjoyed with a 2013 barrel fermented Chardonnay from the Dr Konstantin Frank Winery in New York State. In the 50’s Ukrainian born Dr Frank pioneered research into producing delicate European grape varieties in cold climates and founded his own winery in the Finger Lakes region of the state. The wine displayed aromas of peaches and melon, good acidity and a lingering finish and although coupling with the chowder, the writer found it interesting but not outstanding. The following course, a Texas Taco Salad was tasty and imaginative, the accompanying wine, a 2014 Vin Gris de Cigare from the Bonny Doon Winery in California, a pink or “blush” wine (rose to Europeans) displaying wild fruits with a delicate nose and refreshing acidity on the palate was enjoyed as Maitre de Bouche William Hohlt gave the discourse on wines and cuisine of the South-West.

At this point in the proceedings Nicol presented Giles with the Quach from Goustevin Scotland as a mark of friendship and James duly “did the honours” with the obligatory bottle of good malt whisky! Then Executive Chef Pete Gulesian brought in the main course, salt encrusted Prime Rib of Beef and ceremoniously broke up the thick salt casing before slicing (rather generously!) the prime rib. This was accompanied by twice baked Potatoes, Indiana Corn on the Cob and Cornbread (but why, oh why do they serve hot food on cold plates?) and in the wine glass, a 1991



Nicol hands over the Goustevin Scotland quach to Giles.....



.....while James prepares to donate the malt whisky

Napa Valley grape sourced Chateau Thomas Winery Cabernet Sauvignon. Presented in a magnum, this wine displayed classic Cab Sauv qualities, rich fruit on the nose, really well balanced on the palate with still some hints of tannin and a strong lingering, satisfying finish. At twenty four years aging, this wine drank extremely well.....more please!!!! Maitre de Cave Charles Thomas fittingly gave the discourse on the wines, cuisine and geography of the Mid-West and you could just tell that he was very proud of his 1991 wine! The Gala Dinner culminated in a Marion Berry Cobbler with Whipped Cream? Marion Berry is an indigenous blackberry developed and grown in

Oregon in the North West and in this case served with a baked savoury filled with vanilla ice cream and whipped cream on top – very decadent...but tasty! In the glass was a Raspberry “Vin d’Ete” Dessert wine from the Eola Hills Winery near Salem, Oregon, the wine literally produced from ripe raspberries, crushed and inoculated. Spirits are added during fermentation, similar to the Port production process, and this produces a wine that is simply the essence of raspberries.....the aroma explodes in your nostrils, the palate is assailed with fruit and the finish is most satisfying! The discourse was ably presented by the Porte Cep, Eugene Roberts and encompassed, as in previous discourses, the wines, cuisine and culture of, in this case, the North West. The dinner was rounded off with Coffee Americano, a 50% mix of Espresso and water (invented by American GI’s during WW2), prior to the assembled company departing for home. A most pleasant evening in both convivial surroundings and company, accompanied by an imaginative and satisfying menu with interesting wines.