

Goustevin Visit to Indianapolis 2015

by Ormond Smith

It was with great anticipation that the news of Goustevin Indianapolis first International Grand Chapitre to be held in Indianapolis in 2015 was announced by Connetable Giles Hoyt when in Germany last year at the Hannover Chapitre and members from Scotland, Germany and France embraced the concept with relish. With the date of September 2015 “cast in stone” along with other international dates (Scotland 2016), it was with some surprise that we learned that the Grand Conseil Magistral in Rouen had decided to organise a somewhat unexpected trip to Turkey in May of this year, impinging very much on the US trip. The end result of this was a degree of disenchantment among the European embassies and to the great detriment of attendance in America which, in the writer’s eyes, must have been a huge disappointment to Giles Hoyt and his members in Indianapolis who had gone to a lot of effort to organise a most educational, informative and above all, enjoyable tour for those who finally managed to attend. Hopefully lessons can be learned from this for the benefit of all Chapitre organisers.

In the end, of the European embassies, only Scotland attended what was, certainly, a more costly event than those held in Europe but for Connetable Nicol, James Sheerin and Ormond Smith and joined by Angus and Anne-Marie Meldrum (fresh from a fantastic cruise up the Alaskan coast), a full week of cultural visits along with wine and bourbon tastings at some most interesting venues. From France, Grand Maitre des Ambassades Manuel Chanavaz and his wife Claire joined us, breaking into Manuel’s Canadian lecture tour. The Scots jetted into Indy a day before the tour started, ostensibly to get over any jet-lag and also to enjoy visits to both the Indianapolis Motor Speedway (forget what you may have seen on TV – this place is enormous!!!!) and the Dallara Indycar factory where all the Indy race cars are assembled. We’d hardly unpacked before Dan and Doris Weisman arrived at our hotel, The Fairfield in downtown Indy, to whisk us off for dinner at the appropriately named “North End Barbeque and Moonshine” restaurant where we were joined by Connetable Giles and his wife Delores – the restaurant specialises in traditional American food and as you may have guessed.....bourbon! Forget any jet-lag, we thoroughly enjoyed the cuisine and the following “flights” of bourbon were savoured and appreciated, accompanied by a most knowledgeable and informative waitress. Aye, a good start to our Tour!!

On the Friday morning and despite a rain shower, we headed off to the Dallara Indycar factory (www.dallara.it/wps/portal/en/racing-vehicles/IndyCar) where we had a most informative and interesting visit culminating in attempts on the race simulator to break the Indy Speedway lap record. I’ll tell you, trying to line the car up for the corners when barrelling down to the main straights at 200 plus mph is.....challenging, but most satisfying!!! Our visit to the Motor Speedway (www.indianapolismotorspeedway.com) followed, with an informative tour of the circuit (known as the “Brickyard”), its facilities and the Pagoda control tower with guide Bill Ulrig and naturally, we seized our opportunity to stand on the famous “Yard of Bricks”. As already commented, the Speedway complex is literally enormous and with ease the Vatican City, Wimbledon, the Roman Coliseum, The Pasadena Rose Bowl, Yankee Stadium and Churchill Downs (home to the Kentucky Derby) could all be fitted in with ease and still have space to



Nicol, James & Ormond stand on the famous "Yard of Bricks" with the Pagoda in the background

spare!! The complex not only has the famous oval circuit but also an elaborate infield circuit built for Formula One Grand Prix use and a Moto GP circuit for motor bikes.....and a golf course, not to mention all the race buildings and the Museum. It would be fair to say that the Speedway is unique.....it simply could not be built nowadays – the costs alone would be quite astronomical.

We were then whisked off for lunch by Giles to the Athenaeum Rathskeller restaurant, in the basement of the former “Das Deutsche Haus”, a cultural centre celebrating German culture (see www.athenaeumfoundation.org) where we enjoyed typical Bavarian cuisine....and a stein of most pleasant local craft beer! The afternoon was free and we had a wander around downtown Indy and its interesting buildings before meeting up with Angus and Anne-Marie who had jetted in from Seattle after their Alaskan cruise We were dining at the renowned Chef Joseph’s restaurant that evening (www.chefjosephs.com) where we had an imaginative menu, pleasant wines and the company of members of the Indianapolis Conseil. Appetizers of Seared Scallop with Sushi Glaze accompanied by a sparkling Toad Hollow Risque from Languedoc-Roussillon preceded an opening course of Poached Jumbo Shrimp, Red Beans, Corn and Bibb Lettuce Salad with a 2012 DOC Pio Cesare Chardonnay from Piemonte. The main course, Roasted Venison Loin & Lamb Chop, with Mushroom Duxelle, Roasted Potato and a Lavender Blackberry Demi (extremely tasty!) was complimented by a 2011 Ambroise del’Her from Chateau Nozieres, a Malbec from Cahors in France. Rounding off a memorable meal was a dessert of Fresh Caramelised Pear Tart with a NV Perrier-Jouet Champagne, its effervescent spiced finish going well with the tart. Incidentally, our bourbon education continued after dinner in the bar of the restaurant!



“Bison swimming a river” - this painting on sale at \$32,000



The blacksmiths shop or "Smiddy"

Saturday saw us literally cross the road from our hotel to the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art (www.eiteljorg.org) where we were enthralled with both the exhibits and the quite fantastic paintings, some so vivid and detailed that you would be excused for thinking that they were photographs! A most enjoyable and absorbing morning passed whereby we gleaned much



American tribal chief's traditional head-dress

information (for example, the distinct difference between a tipi and a wigwam) on the myriad of American tribes, their cultures and existence. Some of the modern art was of less interest to the writer, being somewhat impressionistic, but of much interest were authentic clothing, crafted tools and artefacts made by the tribes of yesteryear. Lunch was then enjoyed at the Museum prior to us motoring out to Conner Prairie just to the north of Indianapolis. This place, certainly from their website, (www.connerprairie.org)



.....where the Blacksmith works on the anvil

appears to be aimed at the much younger generations, but in fact it encompasses all ages.

Centred around life in the Mid-West in the 19th century and around the times of the American Civil War, the assembled sprawling “township” graphically illustrates life as it happened during that period with staff appropriately dressed for the period and fascinatingly, treating life as if it was “in the present”. It was a most interesting visit but sadly time was against us – we could have happily whiled away more hours there. Although pro Union Indiana was directly involved in the War, any attacks on Indianapolis, the state capital, were thwarted and the building set up at Conner Prairie displays the general effect of the Confederate raids on the southern part of the state. We then headed directly thereafter to the home of Goustevin members Karen Warner and Ed Koolish, by way of the extensive wine shop where the very knowledgeable Dan Weisman helps out, for a most imaginative American themed dinner accompanied by wines carefully selected by the extrovert Jeff Eppler (a former Connetable) – a very pleasant evening indeed.

A sunny, warm (very!) Sunday dawned and the Scots were collected by Giles for a trip north of Indianapolis to the Indiana Gun Club where a session of Skeet shooting entertained the visitors as we attempted, with some success, to shoot as many skeets as possible. Similar to our clay pigeon shooting but quite a bit faster and across the range rather than away from the guns – Anne-Marie wasn’t to be left out as she was given the task of “firing the skeets” on the call of the participant.....great job, Anne- Marie! Following the “carnage” of skeets on the range, Giles took us into the Gun Club shop where we were awe-struck by the number and range of guns on display and

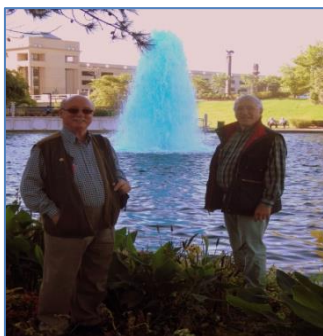


The sterling silver Borg Warner Trophy to the Indy 500 winner -now worth over \$1m!!

for sale, ranging from handguns through shotguns and rifles to automatics and assault weaponry. Further comment is un-necessary. Thereafter and on our way to “The Brickyard” (Indy Speedway) for a visit to the Museum we stopped for a satisfying lunch at a Bob Evans outlet before meeting up with Pat Wagner on the steps of the Museum building within the Speedway complex. For any “petrol head”, a visit here is a MUST – the display of race vehicles plus other beautiful cars of yesteryear (and continually being changed hence no catalogue being on hand), is quite amazing. The evolution of Indy race cars from the “beasts” of the early 20th century, through the front engine Offenhauser powered cars of the 40’s and 50’s to the introduction of the rear engine cars which have

now become “the norm” was fascinating, particularly for the Scottish party with the 1963 second placed Lotus 38 driven by Jim Clark on display. Unfortunately, his 1965 race winning 38 is now privately owned and not in the museum. Another exhibit is the

STP Lotus Wedge, a Pratt & Whitney gas turbine powered race car, intended to be used by Jim Clark on the 1968 “500”. Although Jim



practiced the car, he sadly lost his life at Hockenheim shortly before the “500”.

With all the different cars on display we could have spent hours there. What an enjoyable afternoon! Sunday evening would see us attend the Goustevin Indianapolis Chapitre and Gala Dinner which, of course, was the principal reason for our trip to America. For full details of what was an excellent evening, please go to the separate report "[Indianapolis Chapitre & Gala Dinner](#)".



1963 Indy 500 second placed Lotus 38 driven by Jim Clark

A leisurely start to Monday allowed the Scots to “do their own thing” and whilst Angus and Anne-Marie relaxed, the intrepid Conseil trio went off to explore the pleasant walk along the Indiana Central Canal in downtown Indy. Not a navigable waterway but home to gondolas, this is an artificially constructed feature from the disused and defunct original but nevertheless relaxing.....just a pity there were not a few coffee shops along the way. The original canal (or parts of it) was an ambitious plan in the 19th century to link the Wabash Canal to the Ohio River, some 296 miles.....it never happened. The Indy section now forms part of the White River State Park and seemingly six species of turtle populate the canal



The Easley Winery in downtown Indianapolis



Our guide Larona explains the bottling and labelling procedures

and are studied to see how urban environments affect wildlife.....we didn't see any! A late morning beer in TGI Fridays preceded lunch at Shapiro's Jewish-American restaurant, a very popular venue judging by the numbers of diners! The afternoon kicked off with a nearby visit to the Easley Winery (www.easleywinery.com) in downtown Indianapolis, a producer of grape and fruit wines. Our guide Larona took us through the winery (which gets its grapes from both Michigan and Indiana) which despite its small size, supplies its wines to wine shops in several states. The original building dates back to 1924 and now houses the press house and fermentation room of the winery. Interestingly, the founders Jack and Joan Easley, having purchased the former Fertig Ice Cream Company premises in order to expand their home wine making hobby then realised that it was illegal to make and then sell wine in Indiana – the lawyer (Jack) then formed an association with other “dreamers” and successfully fought their case with the State and got the law changed in 1971.....the Easley Winery was up and running! Tour over and back into the shop (displaying a painting of Jim Clark at Indy in 1965.....good taste!!) we commenced a most enjoyable degustation of some of the products of this winery – well made wines displaying good fruit and acidity in the whites and well bodied structure in the reds. Their 2013 Riesling and 2012 Chardonnay wines were pleasant but not striking, the 2012 Chambourcin (a hybrid red wine of uncertain parentage) had hints of black pepper and oak while the 2013 and 2011 Cabernet Sauvignons both displayed a lighter style, tart cherry undertones and subtle oak flavours. For the writer, the 2014 Traminette (a cross between the French/American hybrid Joannes Seyve and the German Gewurztraminer) and Indiana's signature wine was quite distinguished with a distinct floral aroma and pronounced honeysuckle flavours on the palate giving a long, clean finish.....a rather agreeable wine!

For some strange reason, it would have appeared that the Scots reputation for “the appreciation of wine and spirits” had some influence on our hosts for next on the agenda was a visit to a local craft brewery! The St Joseph Brewery (www.saintjoseph.beer) had taken over a disused building in



Indy night scene - the elaborate "Monument Circle" as seen from the Skyline Club

2015, formerly a Catholic church dating back to 1880, and great effort was entailed in getting the large fermentation tanks, some 15 in total, into the building without having to make drastic alterations.....mission successful! The range of craft beers now on tap is extensive and considered judgement was given to quite a number of their products after Head Brewer Alan Simons had given us a tour of the set up. The premises are not only a brewery but also a pub, which has become a popular “howff” with the trendy citizens of Indy. Interesting and indeed tasty beers were sampled.....a very pleasant degustation!

Our final night in Indy would take in dinner at the Skyline Club, a most distinguished private business club atop The One America Building, (Indy's highest), sitting on the 36th floor overlooking the city and the giant Lucas Oil Stadium where the Indianapolis Colts were playing the New York Jets at football.....sadly they got trounced – from the Club we could just about see the action on the large screen inside the stadium, thanks to the open roof. The views from the restaurant overlooking Indianapolis, particularly at night are most striking. A most pleasant evening in congenial company, an imaginative menu with very agreeable wines – unfortunately the writers notes on menu and wines has got misplaced....hence the lack of detail. Back at the hotel the idea of an “early” night before our departure for Kentucky seemed most sensible.



Pumpkins galore at Hubers

The mini coach arrived with Giles at the wheel and having overcome the logistical exercise of loading umpteen cases on board, it was off down Interstate 65 towards the state line with Kentucky before turning off to visit the Huber Winery & Orchards (www.huberwinery.com) near Starlight in the rolling countryside (by-passing Edinburgh on the way.....no kidding!). Actually, the winery and orchards are only part of this enterprising establishment as they are also into extensive fruit and vegetable farming with a bustling on-site market, a bakery, an ice cream parlour with delicious home-made ice cream (yes, first hand knowledge.....we yielded to temptation!) and a distillery. Even more astonishing is that the highly productive winery is run by only four of a staff and they produce something like 30 different wines and fruit infusions while the distillery, run by two people,



The Sauvignon Blanc was very enjoyable!

produces Hubers brandies, ports, gin and vodka. A number of the wines are from grape varieties which are hybrids, not known in Europe, but nevertheless very interesting and appealing. We were introduced to Scott DeWees, their enthusiastic Tours Manager who would take us on a tour of both the very compact winery and distillery and suitably armed with a large glass of Sauvignon Blanc, off we trundled.

We were able to watch as this seasons grapes were gently pressed before the juice was pumped into the fermentation tanks. We were also able to watch the distiller in action at the single still with production of brandy.....all most interesting and indeed thirsty work, which leads us very nicely to the Tasting Loft! With an extensive list before us, some 48 options encompassing wines, infusions and brandies not to mention grappa, careful scrutiny was required for the “limited eight samples”.....we need not have been so selective as Scott and ably assisted by his wife Alison just kept on dispensing Reserve Pinot Gris, barrel fermented 2013 Chardonnay, Stella Di Luce rose (a premium blend of Chambourcin and Cabernet Sauvignon), Blaufrankisch (2013) and Indiana’s signature wine, the Traminette (a cross between the hybrid Joannes Seyve & Gewurtztraminer).....the samplings went on and naturally, being “old hands” at wine tastings we didn’t imbibe – well, not too much!!



In the Tasting Loft and Dan inspects the extensive wine list – decisions...decisions!!



A rather pleasant 2011 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon at the Rye

After trying a couple of their brandies, we topped off the degustation with a sampling of Hubers Autumn Gold, an enchanting ice wine with smooth honey, apricot and orange blossom flavours to tantalise both nose and palate. What a finish! After a much needed lunch which was enjoyed at the Winery, it was realised that much as we had savoured (literally!) our experience at Hubers, it had taken a tad longer than anticipated with the result that the

planned visit to quite magnificent Churchill Downs (www.churchilldowns.com), the home of the famous Kentucky Derby horse race, had to be “pulled” from our schedule so it was straight to our hotel in Louisville, the 21C Museum Hotel (www.21cmuseumhotels.com/louisville) near to the Ohio River. This somewhat unusual (unique?) hotel is brimful of objects d’art and at times, bizarre items like their signature plastic red penguins dotted about the lobbies and corridors – nevertheless the hotel is very comfortable. Having arrived late afternoon, our hosts Dan and Giles led us astray with a visit to the Down One Bourbon Bar (www.downonebourbonbar.com), Louisville’s premier bourbon bar near to the hotel where “some” flights of different bourbons were sampled....and enjoyed! Dinner that evening was to be at the Rye Restaurant (www.ryeonmarket.com) where a most imaginative menu had been prepared, semi tapas style and the food was accompanied by very pleasant wines. The cholesterol defeating dessert, a Chocolate Cremeux was paired with an aged brandy. That would have been a most pleasant way to end the evening.....but for the bar at Hotel 21C where Jeff Eppler insisted (ok, we didn’t really object!) that we do yet another bourbon sampling with at least four different flights doing the rounds. Inevitably, a glass of “the moonshine” mysteriously appeared with the stern warning “just a sip and NO more.....this is firewater!!”. Yup, Jeff was right!!!!

It was a bright start the next morning as we headed out of the city for a visit to Margaux Farm (www.margauxfarm.com) in the rolling hills of bluegrass country. Kentucky’s premier horse training facility, which covers some 650 acres of land, is specially laid out with no less than three unique racing tracks. Commencing with thoroughbred reproduction from top stallions, the foals are raised with unique care and attention with dedicated training which is ongoing until they are ready for their racing debuts. We were met by general manager Michael Hardie who certainly is not a Kentuckian.....he hails from Londonderry in Northern Ireland! He lead us through the breeding stables and fully explained the



Anne-Marie on "speaking terms" with one of the mares at Margaux

procedures involved. We then moved up to the stables which housed a number of young horses, well looked after and in top condition – from these stables they have ready access to the tracks and training facilities and they are carefully trained up until ready for their competitive outings. With the cost of thoroughbred stallions and mares running into \$millions, this is one serious establishment where a single failure to produce a winning horse can easily damage their reputation. No pressure then! All too soon we were on our way for lunch but with the level of interest shown by the party, much more time could have been spent at the farm with Michael answering countless questions from the group. Lunch would be enjoyed in the pleasant township of Midway, an old railway town (midway, unsurprisingly!) between Frankfort and Lexington with the rail tracks literally running alongside the main street in the centre of town, active tracks I may add, as a freight train trundled through during lunch. No casual wandering around sounds like a good maxim! The Heirloom Restaurant



The Woodford Reserve Distillery Tasting Room & Reception Centre

(www.heirloommidway.com) was well patronised and it was easy to see why – well prepared meals, nicely presented and boy, were they tasty! Suitably “recharged” we were on the move again, this time to visit the famed Woodford Reserve Distillery (www.woodfordreserve.com), near Versailles (although pronounced “Versails” down these here parts!). The tour



Barrels of matured bourbon are rolled down to the bottling room

presentations are well rehearsed, slick and professional and although there are obviously set

timings for each tour, it never felt rushed and our very knowledgeable guide Russell took great pains to ensure that each and every question was clearly answered. For the likes of the Scots, the procedures were very akin to those of malt whisky production back here in Scotland but nevertheless, the tour was certainly of great interest. Certainly of interest was the fact that in this distillery, production is concentrated on small hand crafted batches rather than high volume. We were about to verify the standard! On our return to the visitor centre which houses not only the well stocked (and popular!) retail outlet, but also the opulent Tasting Room where we (naturally!?!) headed. Russell then introduced two expressions of Woodford's best, a Reserve and a Double Oaked, talking us through the tasting process in order to extract the maximum pleasure from each glass. From there, the retail shop enticed us and a number of bottles of bourbon were purchased for return to Scotland. It could be safely said that we were impressed with the product!

Suitably endowed with "inner warmth" and clutching examples of Woodfords best, we trundled back to Louisville, Dan expertly managing to avoid the peak time traffic chaos in the city. A freshen up and we were off again, this time for the closing dinner of our trip, at Lilly's Kentucky Bistro (info@lillyslapeche.com) in the eastern suburbs of the city.....an understated looking bistro on a



**The Meldrums with
Jeff and Sandi
Eppler at Lilly's**

corner site but inside was tastefully decorated and the food was excellent! The meal opened with a Charcuterie Plate, with Black Kasset Gypsy (I'm stumped...but it was tasty!), Groezinger Kjelbasa, Mortadella Salume, Brown Mustard, Figs Jam and Grilled Boule.....a real combination of tastes which complimented each other and this dish was accompanied by a 2014 Fiorini Lambrusco Grassparossa "Becco Rosso".....ok, how many of you automatically thought of that cheap fizzy Lambrusco of yesteryear? This wine from Emilia-Romagna in Italy is a blend of 80% Grasperossa di Castelvetro and 20% Lancellotta (now honestly, tell me that you have actually heard of these varieties?), the latter wine softening out the burly Grasperossa. Deep red and nicely balanced for a young wine, this seemed to go very well with the charcuterie. The second course was Coriander Maple Leaf Farm Braised Duck, served with a Cherry Jus, Smoked Paprika Risotto & Broadbent's Bacon Fava Beans and most appealing it looked.....and tasty! To go with the duck was a 2011 Quinta das Maias Vinho Tinto from the Dao region of Portugal, a well structured wine, deep red, medium bodied with good tannins and on the palate, rich and mouth-filling with a touch of spice on the lingering aftertaste.....the evening was definitely getting better!!

Onto the Main Course, a succulent Piedmontese Flat Iron Steak cooked to perfection and served with Roasted Peppers, Peruvian Potatoes (a slightly acquired taste for the writer), Baby Kale and a Sauce au Poivre. This chef knows what he is doing!! In the glass was a 2012 Zorzal "Field Blend" from Tupangato in Argentina's Mendoza region, a blend of Cab Sauv (70%) /Malbec (30%) which gives a dark red, tannic wine with a rich aftertaste and which complimented the steak rather well. The "Fourth Course" (dessert) was a Mixed Berry Sabayon with Fried Capriole Farm Goat Cheese which, for the writer, didn't sound like an appetising combination.....what did I know! The harmony between the cheese and fruit worked well and this dish was accompanied by a Hugo NV Sparking Rose from Traisental in Austria. From Weingut Markus Huber, this Zweigelt / Pinot Noir blend, delicate and fresh with fruity, spicy overtones went well with the Sabayon. Animated conversation filled the room as we reminisced on what had been a great week and eventually we meandered back to the hotel.....no, in fact we didn't meander - the driver was quite sober!! With an early start next



**Lilly's dessert - Mixed
Berry Sabayon with
Fried Capriole Farm
Goat Cheese....tasty!!!**

morning, a last dram in the bar with our hosts seemed reasonable and in the morning, “bright-eyed and bushy tailed” (well almost!), we assembled in the hotel lobby, loaded the suitcases in the mini coach (seemed easier on the way down for some strange reason!) and with Giles capably driving, we headed north for Indianapolis Airport for our respective flights. Reflections? A full week of visits, both cultural and enjoyable, some “wetter” than others and all in all a memorable time in the Mid-West and our grateful thanks go to Goustevin Indianapolis for the invitation and in particular to Giles and Delores, Dan and Doris for the organisation, hospitality and attention to detail which ensured that we thoroughly appreciated our time there with interesting American cuisine, delightfully different wines and without forgetting our in depth introduction to the delights of bourbon!

Heartfelt thanks!!

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