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Monday, September 17, 2018

American Friends of Versailles in Paris, Part 2



An all-white fireworks display at the palace concluded the grand fete, a breathtaking celebration for a worthy achievement.

by Sharon Hoge and Jeanne Lawrence

On Friday, we recounted several exclusive events from the four-day trip to Paris with the American Friends of Versailles (AFV), including visits with the first lady of France, **HRH Prince Charles de Bourbon des Deux Siciles**, and the American Ambassador to France.

But the trip's high point was private time at Versailles Palace away from the crowds, touring the premises, admiring the three projects AFV sponsored there in honor of Franco-American fellowship, and attending an extraordinary black-tie evening with champagne and dinner served in the elegant palace chambers.

ADMIRING THE RESTORED CEILING

Our trip commenced in the Queen's Guard Room, where we admired the Louis XIV ceiling paintings we had raised funds to restore.



AFV members were invited to visit Versailles on Monday when it is closed to the public.



Versailles National Museum Director Laurent Salome greets AFV Founder Catharine Hamilton and thanks the AFV group for restoring the historic ceiling painting.



The ceiling of the Queen's Guard Room had deteriorated and required patching to hold it intact.



The restored ceiling, featuring the Chariot of Jupiter, was originally commissioned for Louis XIV.



Faith Coolidge admires the renovated ceiling, stucco, and side panels.

DINING WITH DUCASSE

After private guided tours, we dined in **Alain Ducasse's** new Ore restaurant in the palace.



After private tours of Versailles, the group was served lunch at Ore, the new Alain Ducasse restaurant in the palace.



At Ore, seating consists of long, family-style tables.



Chilled green pea soup was served with goat curd.



The main course was corn-fed chicken breast with Anna potatoes.



Susan Gutfreund and Maria Manetti Shrem.



Jane de Moret Foster, Christina Cressey, and Marjorie Vickers.

PREVIEWING AN EXHIBIT OF GARDEN PAINTINGS

The very first AFV project was restoring the Bosquet des Trois Fontaines, a mini-garden on the premises. Its original state was depicted in an exhibit of 17th-century paintings we previewed at the Trianon.



At the Trianon, we viewed an exhibit of 17th century Jean Cotelle paintings depicting Versailles garden bosquets.



The AFV group previewed the exhibit before its opening that evening.



AFV Director Michèle Fieschi-Fouan with exhibit curator Beatrice Sarrazin.

Cotelle's painting of the Bosquet de Trois Fontaines, the first project restored by the AFV.



The displayed paintings were interspersed with statues from the bosquets.

Admiring the portrayal of AFV's first restoration project, the Trois Fontaines Bosquet.



Lovely gardens surround the Trianon.

PRIVATE TOUR OF MARIE ANTOINETTE'S FANCIFUL "FARM"

The Hameau, or "hamlet," where **Marie Antoinette** played at being a peasant girl, has recently been fully restored. We were shown through its rustic buildings.



Marie Antoinette came to the Hameau to play at living a simpler life.



Dressed as a shepherdess, Marie Antoinette went to the Hameau to escape from the hustle and bustle of palace life.



Multiple craftspeople, sponsored by Dior, restored the Hameau, which opened to the public in May 2018.



Conservator Jeremie Benoit described features of the Hameau with Michèle Fieschi-Fouan.



19th century furnishings are typical of the historic style of Napoleon's wife Empress Marie-Louise.



A dining area in the Hameau Games House.

BLACK TIE GALA

Wednesday night, we returned to the palace decked out in jewels and gowns for an evening that opened with champagne served in the Hall of Mirrors.



On Wednesday, the AFV group arrived at Versailles for a gala evening in the palace.



J. Jeffrey Louis III and Elizabeth Louis.



Several AFV members assembled in the courtyard.



Catharine Hamilton and brother Richard Cline, Jr.



Dr. Susan Kendall and Sir Richard Hitt.



Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem.



The W. Brinkley Dickerson Family.



Champagne was served in the Hall of Mirrors.



The Versailles Hall of Mirrors is an elegant setting for guests Alexander McFadden, Wilhelmina McFadden, and Piers Moreton.



Admiring the historic decor.



Nehama Jacobs, Genevieve Antonow, and Sandy Parkerson.



Alex and Jennifer Adler.



Jeanne Lawrence, David and Libby Horn, and Elizabeth and J. Jeffrey Louis III.



Chantal Blondet and Liliana Gaubin.



Diana Ecclestone.



Roberto Passariello, Richard McGinnis, Pamela Goldie-Morrison, and Loretta Lazar.



Keith Crow and Elizabeth Parker Crow beside the Hall's
seventeen arcaded windows. Laurie and James N. Bay.



Baron Roland de l'Espee and Executive Officer of Versailles Thierry Gausseron.



Laura and Joseph Street.

Proceeding through the King's Apartments, we were joined by the royal family for a reception in the elegant Salon d'Hercule, one of the palace's most elegant rooms.



Princess Beatrice de Bourbon des Deux Siciles, her brother HRH Prince Charles, HRH Princess Camilla, and Princesses Maria Carolina and Maria Chiara.



Piers Moreton, Wilhelmina McFadden, Carole McFadden, and Alexander McFadden.



Sipping champagne among the splendors of the Salon d'Hercule, one of the grandest rooms in Versailles.



Bonnie Deutsch Hartung and Andre Michaels.



Vicki and William Hood.



Elodie Arnaud and Thibault Bazin de Caix.



Christina Cressey and Michael Lee.



Olivier, the Vicomte de Rohan, and Versailles President Catherine Pegard.



Anne-Marie de Ganay and Prince Nicolas Dadashkeliani. Genvieve Antonow and AFV Executive Director Kristin N. Smith.

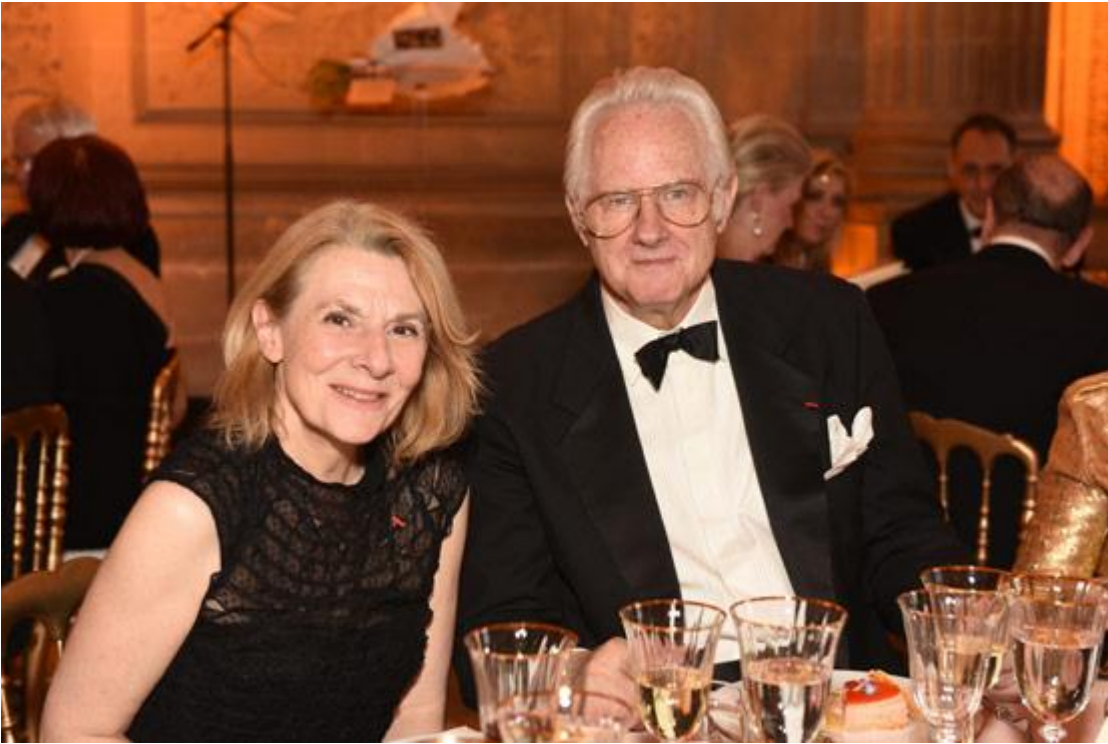
Dinner was served in in the Haut Vestibule of the Royal Chapel. After a surprise musical interlude of organ music, guests were entertained by fireworks on the terrace overlooking the garden.



Dinner was presented in the Haut Vestibule of the Royal Chapel, one of the palace's grandest rooms.



Tables were decorated to reflect the elegance of the setting.



Versailles President Catherine Pegard and David Hamilton.



Becky Dodson and Versailles Conservateur Bertrand Rondot.



Roberto Passariello and Teresa Lee-Kay.



Princess Beatrice and Rick Friedberg.



Carole McFadden, Katherine Harris, and David Horn.



Richard Cline Jr. and Mrs. John Cafaro.



Marjorie Vickers, Phillip Hartung, and Curry Glassell.



Pilar and Juan Pablo Molyneux.



HRH Maria da Gloria de Bourbon de Orleans e Braganza and Didier Wirth.



US Ambassador Jamie McCourt and HRH Prince Charles de Bourbon des Deux Siciles.



Olivier, Vicomte de Rohan, and Olga Litviniuk.



Frederik Paulsen with Catharine Hamilton.



Mr. Jérôme Chartier and Mrs. Virginie Calmels.



Torbjörn and Natalia Tornqvist.



Andrea and Aneel Waraich.



Patrick Micheals and Julie Seiler.



Peggy Berg, Craig Hoffman, and Sharon Oeschger.



Faith Coolidge and Versailles National Museum Director Laurent Salomé.



Jackie and James Nasso.



Richard McGinnis and Nathalie, Comtesse de La Bédoyère.



David Gerkin, Kaitlyn Esposito, Nathan Glassell, and Wilhelmina McFadden.



Brice Bouillon, Raina Miranda, and Piers Moreton.



During Dinner, Versailles President Catherine Pegard called Catharine Hamilton to the podium.



Catharine Hamilton received the French Ministry of Culture's AFV Founder and newly named Commandeur
Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. Catharine Hamilton.



Guests snapped views of the historic chapel where seven-year-old Mozart once entertained Louis XV.



After the performance, guests proceeded to the palace terrace.



We gathered in the garden for a fireworks display.



Alex and Jennifer Adler, David and Whitney Gerkin, Will Dickerson, Kaitlyn Esposito, and Nathan Glassell admiring the fireworks.

Photography by Francis Hammond, Keva Studio, Sharon Hoge, Jeanne Lawrence, and Michèle Fieschi-Fouan.