

BEYOND THE BALL: A WEEKEND OF ACTIVITIES IN PARIS WITH THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF VERSAILLES

JANUARY 19, 2024



The crowd arriving at Versailles.

SOCIAL HISTORY • BY: SHARON HOGE

When the American Friends of Versailles assembled in Paris last summer to celebrate their 25th anniversary, the Gala Dinner and Dance held in the Palace's Grand Trianon was surrounded by an extended weekend of glamorous historic and cultural events. Concerts, receptions, tours, and a picturesque picnic kept the visitors immersed in French culture and friendship from Friday morning right through to Monday night.

Breakfast at the Dior headquarters launched the visit. Before store hours the elegant store on Avenue Montaigne opened to the group for coffee and croissants in the Café and then private tours of its acclaimed museum.



Buffet breakfast in the Dior Cafe before store opening hours.



Welcomed to a private visit by Olivier Flaviano, Director of the Galerie Dior.



Katherine Bryan at the stairway which spirals up through a rainbow of doll-size Dior designs.



A guided tour through displays of Dior designs, gowns, perfumes, and workshops.



Admiring the Bar Suit, star of Dior's 1947 New Look.



Museum displays change every six months.

The group progressed to the duplex apartment of Her Excellency Shaikha Padula Al-Sabah of Kuwait to admire the art collection curated to promote cultural understandings. A luncheon of passed delicacies led up to a toast with Piper-Heidsieck couture Marie Antoinette Champagne.



A light lunch was served at the Al-Sabah reception.



The Al-Sabah art collection is curated to promote cultural understanding.



French AFV Honorary Chairman the Vicomte de Rohan and French Director Michele Fieschi-Fouan at the Al-Sabah reception.

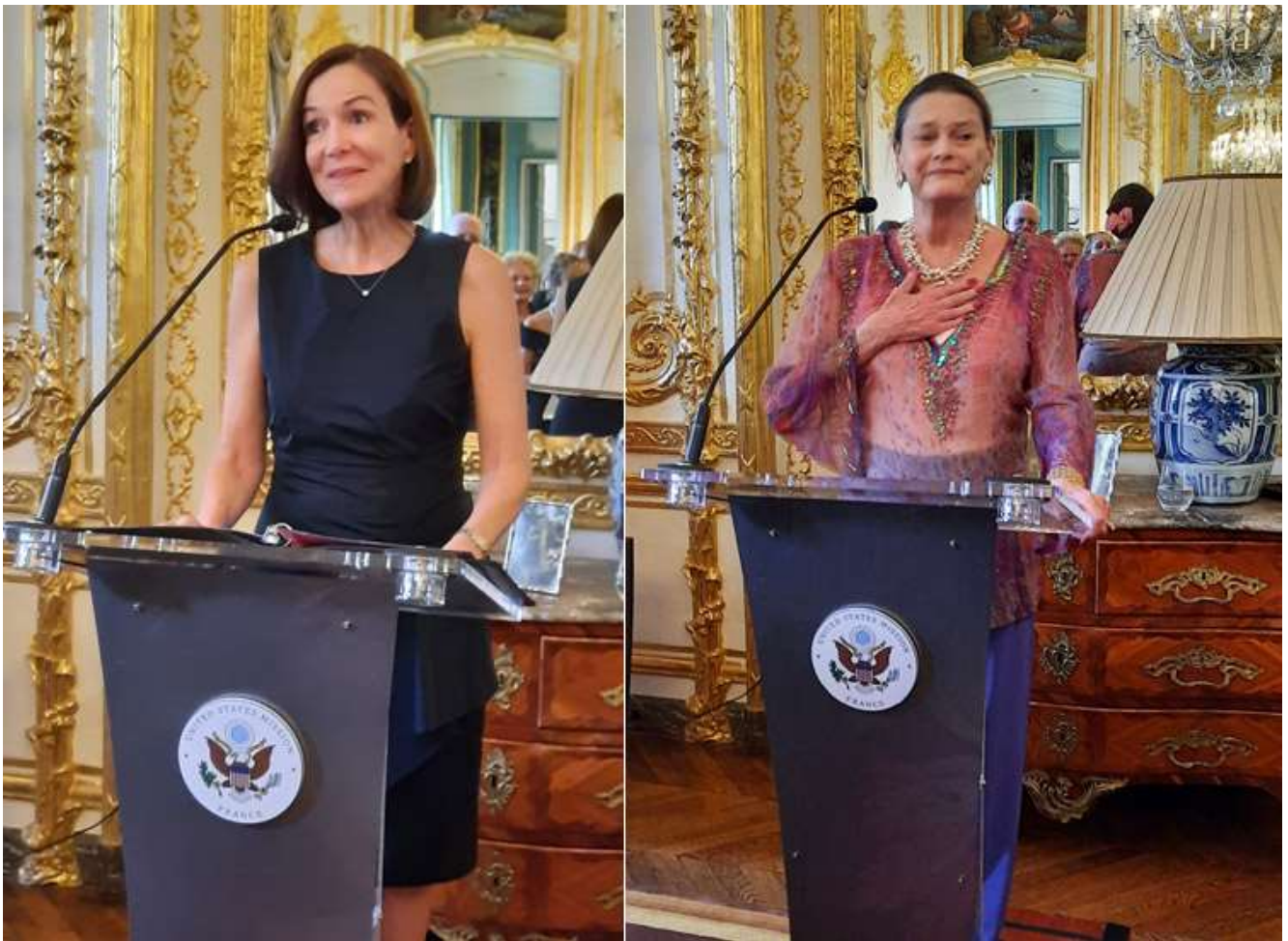


Sandra Kirk and Charles Hood, Santa Fe, NM.



Susan Gutfreund arranged presentation of Piper Heidsieck couture Marie Antoinette Champagne.

Ambassador **Denise Bauer** welcomed the group to the American Embassy that evening for a reception in the historic Chancery and gardens facing the Champs-Élysées.



L. to r.: US Ambassador Denise Bauer welcomed the group to the Embassy Residence; AFV Founder Catharine Hamilton previewed the weekend events.



Greetings from French Director Marie de Noailles, Paris.



Elizabeth Segerstrom and the Vicomte de Rohan.



Joan Tobin, Naples, Florida, and Washington, DC.



Photographer Francis Hammond, Paris and Craig Hoffman, Minneapolis, MN.



Maja and Nicholas DuBrul, New York, NY.



Mr. and Mrs. Ian (Laura) Tobin, Aspen and Naples, Florida.



L. to r.: New York philanthropist Barbara Tober; Le Vicomte de Rohan admires Embassy art.



AFV Director Faith Coolidge New York, NY and the Duc de Noailles, Paris.



A duo sang old favorites.



Cocktails were enjoyed on the terrace overlooking the garden.



The Embassy garden borders on the Champs-Elysees.



Genevieve Antonow, Irene Hunter, Santa Barbara, CA and Chicago, IL.



Josee Nadeau, Ivan Dvorak, Chicago, IL, and Katherine Harris, Sarasota, FL.



Keith, Elizabeth, and Augusta Crow, Washington, DC, with friend Ka Yee Lee.



AFV Founder Catharine Hamilton, distinguished gardener AFV French Director Didier Wirth, and Katherine Harris, Sarasota, FL.



Eloise Haynes, JP Haynes, and Kaila Brinkman, Texas.



International concert pianist Andrew von Oeyen and James Hanson,
Minnesota, MN and Florida.



President Alicia Bryan and Director Katherine Harris, with Princesse Beatrice.

To conclude the day an elegant seated meal was served among the antiques and collectibles in the sumptuous Marais residence of renowned architects **Joseph Achkar** and **Michel Charriere**.



Arriving for dinner at the imposing door to the hotel du Garde-Meuble.



Into the private hotel du Garde-Meuble courtyard the home of the dinner hosts.



Dinner hosts architects Michel Charriere and Joseph Achkar.



The ornate rooms are furnished with antiques and collectibles.



Anne Lantry admiring the decor.



In the library, Ian Kelly, California and London, and Jon Marder, New York, NY.



Tables were set in adjoining rooms.



Dinner was served by candlelight.



Dinner guests AFV Founder Catharine Hamilton and Susan Gutfreund, with host Joseph Achkar.

After the Saturday night gala ball, midday on Sunday, the group was entertained at the elegant home of **H.R.H. Prince Charles of Bourbon Two Siciles, the Duke of Castro**, and his wife **Princesse Camilla**. Internationally acclaimed pianist **Andrew von Oeyen** performed a private concert in the salon before the group proceeded to a reception on the upper terrace with views over the Seine to the Eiffel Tower.



Members of the Royal House Bourbon and Two Siciles Princesse Beatrice, Princess Maria Carolina, Prince Charles, Princesse Camilla, and Princess Maria Chiara.



Sisters Princesse Maria Carolina and Princesse Maria Chiara are students at Harvard and a Paris fashion school



AFV Director Michael Lee, Dallas, TX and Santa Barbara, California, pianist Andrew von Oeyen, and Cynthia Fisher, Boston, MA.



Warner Classics recording artist, international soloist Andrew von Oeyen played a private concert.



Prince Charles with portraits of the past Kings of France.



Post-concert cocktails on the terrace.



Barbara Tober admires the terrace view of the Eiffel Tower.

Sunday evening the group toured Les Invalides, viewing the tomb of Napoleon before enjoying an organ recital in the historic Cathedrale Saint-Louis. A stroll through the halls of Les Invalides led them to the Grand Salon where they were greeted by General Henry de Medlege, Director of the Army Museum.



AFV members assemble for events at historic sites within Les Invalides.



L. to r.: Approaching Napoleon's tomb; Napoleon's remains were brought from St. Helena and entombed here in 1861.



Mr. and Mrs. Terrence (Maureen) Tobin, Ames, IA.



L. to r.: The restored St. Louis organ behind Barbara Tobin who sponsored renovation of NYC's St. Bartholomeu organ; Katherine Harris, Sarasosta, FL and Alicia Bryan, TX.



Seated for the organ recital.



AFV President Alicia Bryan, James Hanson, and Elizabeth Crow, Washington, DC.



Passing through Invalides corridors AFV Executive Director Kristin Smith, Chicago, IL, Faith Coolidge, New York, NY, and Bonnie Deutsch, Chicago, IL.



L. to r.: Raylene Elmore, Tennessee, Elennie Biler, Chicago, IL, and Renee Holman, Texas, overlooking Invalides courtyard; Mr. and Mrs. Ian (Laura) Tobin.



Reception in the Grand Salon.



L. to r.: General Henry de Medlege, Director of the Army Museum, saluted Franco American friendship; Actress Gabrielle DeBrul, New York, NY, with her father Nicholas.



Mr. and Mrs. Alan (Sallymoon) Bentz, Houston, TX.



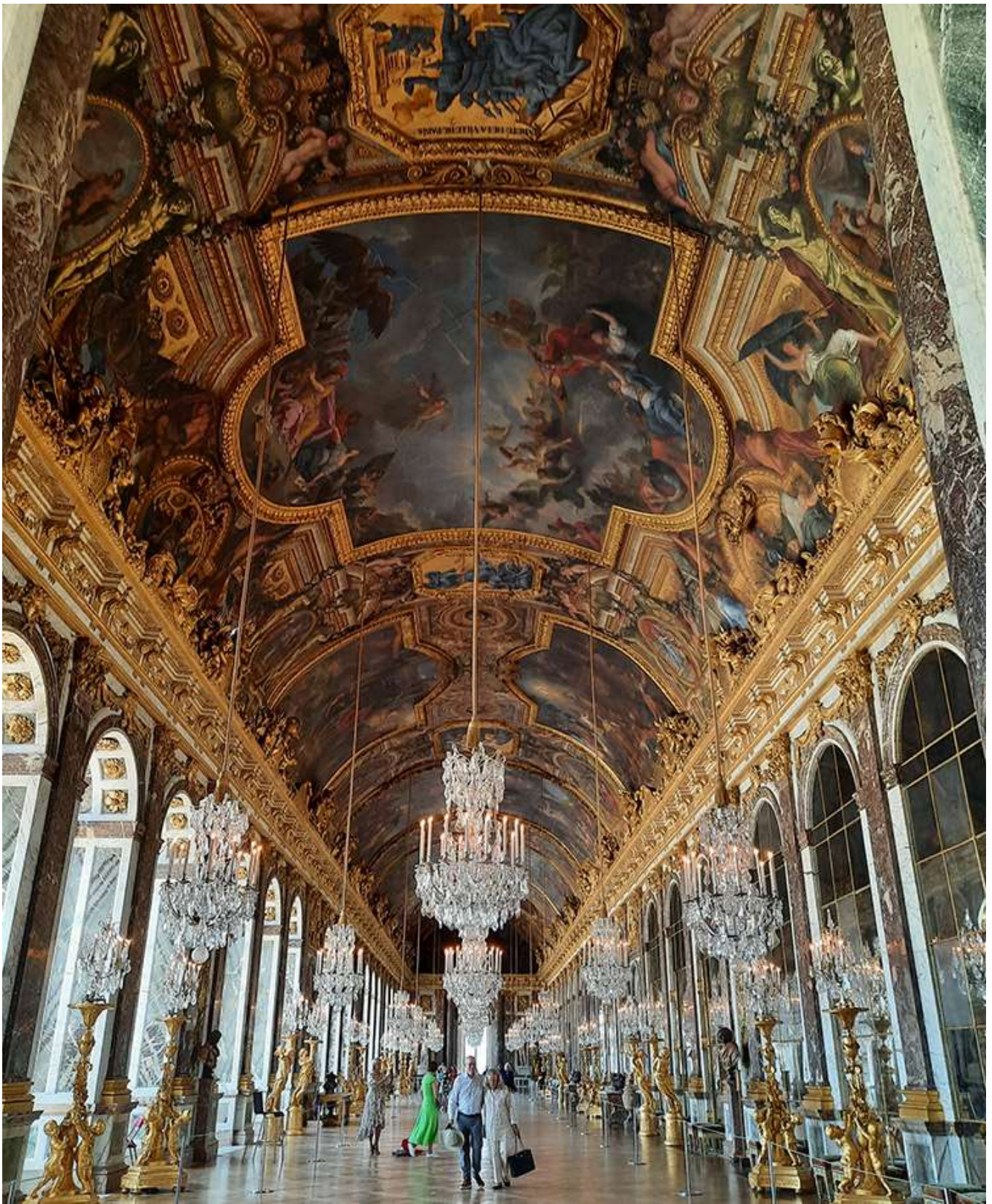
L. to r.: Artist Grimanesa Amorós and jewelry designer Antonio Seijo, Switzerland; Jewelry designer Maja DeBrul.

Monday morning, coaches drove the group to spend a day at the Palace of Versailles on the day it is closed to the public. After a private tour through the Hall of Mirrors and **Marie Antoinette's** apartments, luncheon was an elegant picnic served at the Palace's Orangerie.

Before returning to Paris, the group visited the Queen's Bosquet, a recently restored section of the garden, to view the Virginia tulip trees which were an AFV contribution.



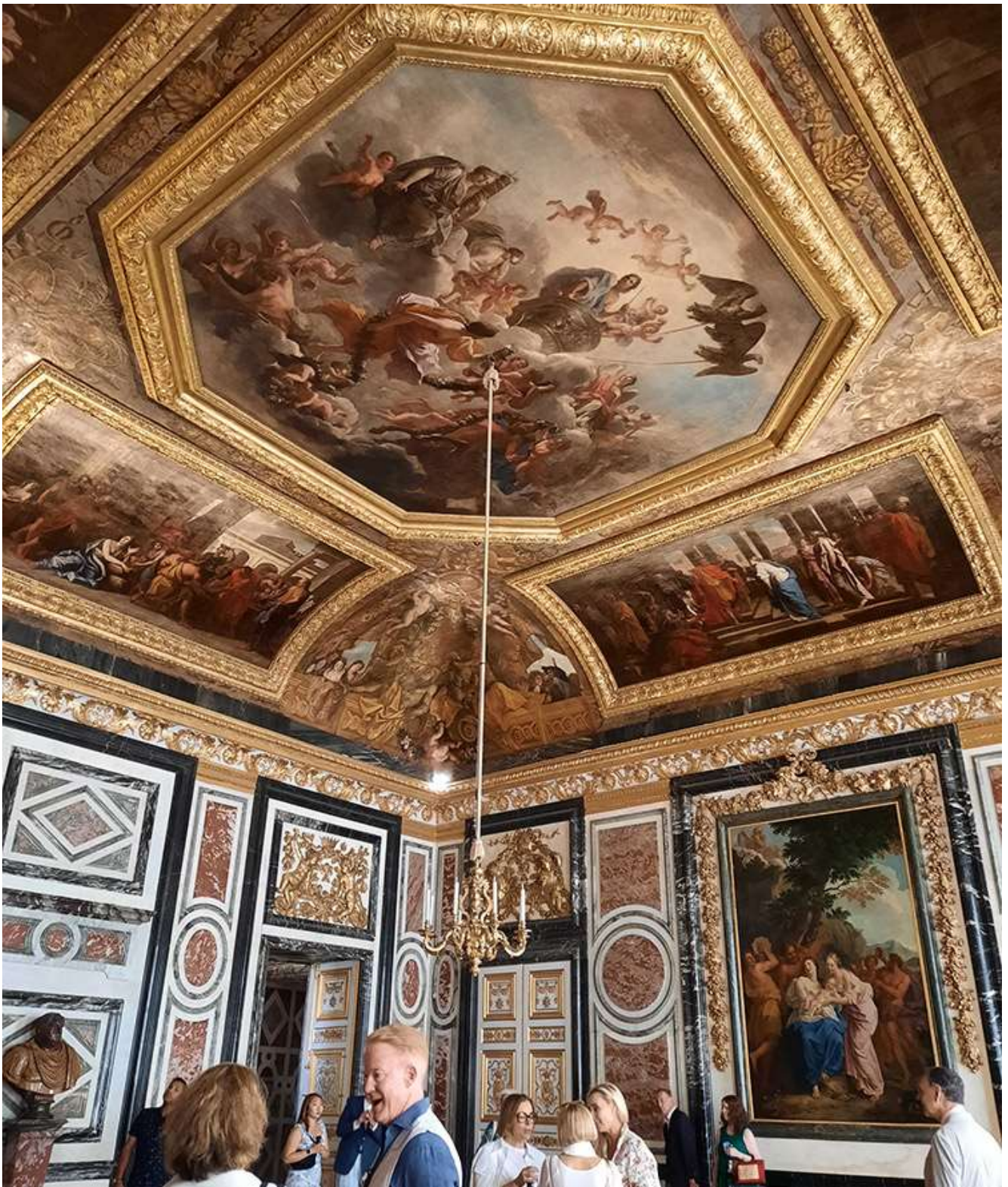
Arriving at Versailles.



Private tour in the Hall of Mirrors.



Patrick Michaels and Aimilia Matsakas, Zurich, in Marie Antoinette's bedroom.



Admiring the Queens Guards Room. Restoring the ceiling painting was an AFV project.



Assembling for a boxed lunch in the Orangerie.



Genevieve Antonow, California and Chicago, IL, Josee Nadeau, Palm Beach, FL and Chicago, IL, and Joan Tobin, Washington, DC and Naples, FL.



Aneel Waraich. Toronto, CA, Ian Kelly, California and London, Patrick Michaels, Zurich, and George Saveriades, Cypress.



Nicholas and Maja DuBrul, New York, NY.



Marianne Carey de Edwards, Ana, Sara, and Pablo Jr. Carey de Edwards from Chile.



James Hanson, Minneapolis and FL, Cindy Galvin, Chicago, and Kathryn and Allan Hubbard, Indianapolis, IN.



L. to r.: Pretty in Pink — Katherine Harris and Eloise Haynes; Irene Hunter, California.



Gabrielle DuBrul.



Amid the luncheon tables Professor Barry Goldsmith, New York, NY and Eloise Haynes.



Lunch was served in wicker boxes.



A wandering accordionist played “Under Paris Skies” and other local tunes.



A generous buffet of sweets concluded lunch.



The group walked to see the Queen's Bosquet. Contributing Virginia tulip trees was an AFV restoration project.



Tulip-shaped blossoms give the tree its name.



Resting in the bosquet.

A grand finale to the anniversary celebration was a reception at the historic home of interior designer **Juan Pablo Molyneux** and his wife **Pilar**, members of the AFV Board of Directors. Cocktails were interrupted for the screening of a film made by the French AFV members to salute **Catharine Hamilton** for her significant and generous contributions to the restoration and preservation of the grand symbol of Franco-American friendship.



Arriving for the closing reception at the historic Molyneux hotel
particulair.



The Tobin family assembled in the Molyneux courtyard — Terry, Maureen, Joan, Ian, and Laura.



Anne Marie de Ganay, Founder Catharine Hamilton, Princesse Beatrice de Bourbon des Deux Siciles, Marie-Noelle de Fouquiere, and Maria Manetti Shrem arrived for the Molyneux cocktail reception.



Ivan Dvorak, Ian Kelly, and Josee Nadeau in the entry with blue tiles designed by Juan Pablo Molyneux.



The Study.



AFV Board member Michael Lee and Thomas Bidie, Switzerland, in the Salon.



L. to r.: Anne Lantry, Washington, DC; Sallymoon Bentz, Houston, TX.



Josee Nadeau and AFV Director Jonathan Marder are fans of the decor.



Mr. and Mrs. Allan (Kathryn) Hubbard, Indianapolis, IN enjoying refreshments in the garden.



AFV President Alicia Bryan introduced the French members' film tribute to Founder Catharine Hamilton.



AFV Honorary Chairman the Vicomte de Rohan lauded Catharine's contributions to Versailles through the years.



AFV Founder Catharine Hamilton reacts to the film celebrating her Franco-American achievements.

Scheduled for next spring, the American Friends of Versailles are planning "Le Gala des Fleurs d'Oranger," May 31-June 3, a Reception in the historic Hall of Mirrors followed by a Seated Dinner in the Chateau Orangerie, along with Cocktail Receptions in the Hotel de Soubis and in a private Marais Hotel de Ville and a Picnic at the Pavillon Frais within the Versailles Gardens. www.americanfriendsofversailles.org

[Click here for Part I, the Gala Dinner](#)

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