

FRENCH POLICE IN CALIFORNIA

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Photos : Faye Sadou

Under the leadership of Philippe Larrieu, French Consul General in Los Angeles, and thanks to an invitation from regional police services, a delegation of 32 French police officers arrived in the City of Angels on January 6 for an official, 11 day visit. It didn't take long for French officers on motorcycles to make their mark on Hollywood. They had barely climbed onto the motorcycles lent to them by their American colleagues that before an L.A. Times article warmly welcomed the exotic team on their way down the coastal road. During a dinner gala hosted at the Consul's house, the French police officers had the honor to meet the famous sheriff of Los Angeles County, Leroy D. Baca, as well as William Bratton, chief of the Los Angeles Police Department. A real gentleman, Sheriff Baca made a speech honoring the long-

lasting Franco-American friendship, citing as an example the illustrious Marquis de Lafayette, who crossed the Atlantic over 200 years ago to defend the young American Republic against the English.

As it turned out, the schedule of the visit was quite busy, and didn't leave much time for the French bikers to relax or go shopping. A real celebration of the cooperation between the two countries, especially in the fight against terrorism, the tone of the official visit was jovial and willing. Led by Patrick Hamon, Vincent Messenger and

Frank Feucher, the French police officers had many opportunities to interact with their Californian colleagues, both from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's office, the LAPD, and the famous California Highway Patrol (CHP).



French Consul General Philippe Larrieu with his guests



“Les Policiers français sont à l’honneur”

Photos : Faye Sadou



Controleur General Patrick Hamon with friends and colleagues

Entre un passage sur le circuit d'Irwindale pour étudier les techniques anti-émeutes des forces locales, des entraînements au guidon des motos rendues célèbres par le feuilleton CHiPS et une rencontre avec l'une des deux stars de la série, Erik Estrada, les policiers français auront tout de même eu le temps de participer à des activités plus touristiques et mondaines, tels un déjeuner à Malibu, une visite des studios Universal ou du Petersen Automotive Museum.

Pour couronner cet emploi du temps bien rempli, nos 32 gardiens de la paix en uniforme de parade auront eu également l'occasion d'accompagner et d'assister leurs confrères du Département de la Police de Beverly Hills (BHPD) affectés à la cérémonie des Golden Globes. Ceux qui d'habitude à Paris forment les escortes officielles des chefs d'états et ministres auront eu ici le plaisir de protéger les évolutions des stars sur le tapis rouge hollywoodien. Malgré la réserve habituelle de ces hommes, on pouvait deviner une pointe d'émotion chez les motards français : l'accueil des médias améri-

cains, et surtout celui de leurs confrères d'outre-atlantique, laissera des souvenirs étoilés dans la mémoire de nos policiers tricolores.

Between a trip to the Irwindale circuit to study local anti-riot techniques, and training on the motorcycles immortalized in "CHiPs and meeting with actor Erik Estrada,," French police officers somehow found time to take part in tourist activities and everyday things, like a lunch in Malibu or, a visit to Universal Studios and the Petersen Automotive Museum.

The team also got to meet with actor Erik Estrada, famous for his role in the popular TV show CHiPs. To top off their busy schedules, our 32 officers put on their formal uniforms to accompany and assist their Beverly Hills Police Department colleagues at the Golden Globe Awards. Those who are used to being official escorts of heads of state and ministers in Paris had the pleasure to protect movie stars as they made their way down the red carpet of Hollywood. In spite of the usual reserve shown by these men in uniform, a touch of emotion was visible in the French bikers: the welcome from American media, and that of their overseas colleagues will leave them with star-studded memories.

