

Hells Angels Crash A Great Gatsby New Year's Eve Party

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Kresner of Oyster Bay Cove, Long Island, invited my wife and I to a New Year's Eve party at their Woodward Estate mansion. Kresner was the owner of Camp Tanglewood in Oceanside, and was trying to duplicate the lavish parties mentioned in F Scott Fitzgerald's 1925 bestseller, *The Great Gatsby*. To announce the party a 1925 car pulled up in front of my home. A vintage dressed actor took out a silver scroll, blew a tune, and announced that the honorable Ferrara family was invited to the special extravaganza.

The night of the event, the weather was cloudy, cold, and it was snowing. We were late for the party, and I was getting lost. So I stopped at a glass phone booth to call for directions. Suddenly, a gang of Hell's Angels on Harley Davidson motorcycles drove in a circle around the telephone booth. They stopped to throw snowballs at the glass booth. My wife was banging on the car window to make me get back in the car. I told the waiter on the phone to have beer and sandwiches ready for the gang.

I approached the leader and invited the group to the party. I thought I could lose them, but they followed me up to the front of the mansion. Thank God the waiter was waiting with a case of beer.

The search lights were flashing and the music could be heard from the driveway. The valet parked my car while an usher walked us into the main ballroom.

The wine, the champagne, the food, the band, the entertainment, was spectacular. The only thing missing was that we were not on the original Gatsby beachfront location. My wife looked dead-stop gorgeous. The problem was that I was so worried about the Hells Angels that I couldn't relax and enjoy myself.

The party was a huge success. The waiter was so busy working the party that he forgot to tell me that the gang drank and ate and left after about 40 minutes. They thanked the waiter and drove off quickly on their motorcycles.

Years later, when I told this story to my son, Guy Anthony, who drives a Harley, he said, "Dad, these Harleys are precious to their owners. Since the snow was falling swiftly, they had to get their bikes home safely."

That night the snow amounts ranged from ten to twelve inches in depth.