

NAPA VALLEY WINE LIBRARY **REPORT**



AUTUMN 2021

2022 Calendar of Events

October 8, 2021 – March 26, 2022

Napa County Historical Society
Exhibit: “Wine: Our Story”
www.napahistory.org/events

Sunday, January 30, 2022

Friends & Foundation, Saint Helena Public Library
BOOKMARK Napa Valley 2022
at Tre Posti, Saint Helena
Features three well-known authors
www.supportshlibrary.org

Sunday, April 24, 2022

Napa Valley Wine Library Association
38th Annual Grand Tasting
Our Napa Valley wineries are invited to pour two wines
www.napawinelibrary.com



*“The purpose of the Napa Valley Wine Library Association
Is to collect and share the stories of the wines and vines
of Napa Valley and in Wine Country Around the World.”*





COVER PHOTO: WARREN WINIARSKI, LEFT AND NATHAN FAY, RIGHT
IN FAY VINEYARD, NAPA, NOVEMBER 1987
ANDRÉE ABECASSIS, PHOTOGRAPHER
PUBLISHED BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE WINIARSKI FAMILY

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Napa Valley Wine Library REPORT

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President's Letter

Dear Friends of the Napa Valley Wine Library,

It's a pleasure to be writing to you again.

We have had an interesting COVID break. We learned to use the available technology and for first-timers were pleased with the results of our Zoom presentations. Along with expanded offerings we reached expanded audiences. For a rundown of the events we've been able to provide on-line and off, please visit our web site at www.napawinelibrary.com and check on "Recent Events." An excellent article about the first planting of Cabernet Sauvignon in what is Stags Leap AVA today and a comprehensive write-up of our Annual Wine Seminar via Zoom are included in this REPORT.

Our projects with UC Davis Library are still moving slowly forward along with some creations of our own Board Members such as "Perspectives" by Jeff Davis, as well as a donation to our collections from James Forbes's Bear's Head Productions with its incredible list of interviewees.

We've missed showing off our friends and their wines to you because of the ABC's limitations on events but are planning to get back on track in 2022. Save the date, Sunday, April 24th, 2022 for our Annual Grand Tasting at Silverado Resort and Spa in Napa, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Meanwhile, while we were busy there were fires, evacuations, smoked grapes, drought, dried up creeks and wells, and half-crops. However, my winemaker says 2021 is going to be a spectacular vintage!

Keep well and keep a lookout for Napa Valley Wine Library events. Our 2022 membership campaign gets underway in January.

Thank you,

Carolyn Martini

President

Napa Valley Wine Library Association



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY E & J GALLO WINERY

Summiting “Matterhorns”:

How Two Men’s Calculated Risks Led to California’s Red Wine Triumph at the 1976 Judgment of Paris Tasting

By Dorothy J. Gaiter

This is a story about a grape and two men and how the three of them together changed the modern world of wine forever.

Both men were in Europe in 1955, but it would be more than a decade before they met. Warren Winiarski, a post-graduate academic and lecturer at the University of Chicago, was in Florence, studying the Renaissance statesman and political theorist Niccolò Machiavelli. Nathan Fay, a California native who loved the outdoors, was climbing the Matterhorn, that massive range of mountains along the Swiss-Italian border so vast and forbidding it is known as the Mountain of Mountains. Fay, who had trained on lesser mountains, topped the Matterhorn in record time among the climbers on that day. According to Fay’s notebook in which he kept a diary of his preparations and the final Matterhorn climb, his guide won a handsome sum from fellow guides – they had bet that the “American” wouldn’t even summit!

Six years later, in 1961, Fay planted the first Cabernet Sauvignon vines in what would become the Stags Leap District of Napa Valley, a location widely believed to be too cold for that variety to thrive. That planting happened 60 years ago this year and, in an extended sense, the seeds of those vines still bear fruit all over the wine world. Meanwhile, Winiarski had an itch his academic life could no longer scratch. During his studies

in Italy, he had fallen in love with a way of life in which wine was an everyday, civilized accompaniment to meals. As he puts it, “I was never the same after that.”

Eventually, he and his wife, Barbara, began to contemplate a complete upending of the life they’d known in Chicago, where their first two children were born and where Winiarski had been teaching at the University. They’d heard exciting things were under way in California involving winemaking. For more than half a century, California’s once vaunted and prosperous wine industry had lain dormant, wiped out by disease and then Prohibition. Finally, there were stirrings of a wine renaissance. The couple thought, “Why not pack up the kids and the books and head out to California to be a part of it?” Winiarski had zero winemaking experience. Nonetheless, with not much more in their pockets than their dreams and their faith in themselves, the couple moved the family to Napa, California.

An onlooker might think both men had risked a lot with these unconventional choices. Winiarski left the distinguished life of letters that had appeared to be his destiny and chose to become a winemaker. Fay’s leap of faith was planting Cabernet in the Stags Leap area. When his vines went into the soils of that “cool” region in 1961, Cabernet Sauvignon wasn’t even a “thing” in

the Napa Valley. Although the variety is the very heart and soul of Napa now, at that time there were only about 600 acres of Cabernet Sauvignon planted in all of California. From a financial point of view, both men were risk-taking on long odds.

Before history would unfurl the results of what were, in fact, educated and highly calculated risks, the two like-minded men became friends, and that friendship led directly to what has been called a “watershed moment in California wine history.” The outcome of the famous Judgment of Paris tasting in 1976 would prove to be a Matterhorn summit of sorts for Winiarski. In that blind tasting, comparing California newcomers’ wines against revered French wines from Bordeaux and Burgundy, the panel of well-respected French judges was stunned by its own conclusions. The New World wines swept the tasting. Winiarski’s 1973 Stag’s Leap Wine Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon S.L.V. came in first place in the reds, outscoring Chateaux Mouton-Rothschild, Montrose, Haut-Brion, and Léoville-Las Cases. The 1973 Chateau Montelena Chardonnay made by Mike Grgich took best white. France itself had acknowledged its equal, and in so doing, immediately transformed the international reputation of California wine and the Napa Valley.



*Nathan Fay, Matterhorn Summit
By permission of the Winiarski family*

By the way, the winning 1973 Cabernet was Winiarski's first commercial vintage. Phrasing it like that might make Winiarski's success sound easy, perhaps even a lucky fluke, but that might be analogous to implying that Nathan Fay was dropped on the summit of the Matterhorn by helicopter. In fact, both men arrived successfully to their respective destinations through dogged determination and hard work. Someone once said to Winiarski that winning the Paris tasting was like being "struck by lightning." To which he replied, "Yes, but first we had to put ourselves in a position where the lightening could strike."

Upon arriving in Napa, Winiarski went straight into training mode. His first job was with Lee Stewart at Chateau Souverain on Howell Mountain, where he was the second man in a two-man operation. It was an excellent place to start because Stewart was a stickler for detail. "He taught me that no detail in winemaking was too small not to command a winemaker's full attention." (One could say the same about the details in mountain climbing where the consequences of overlooking the minutest of them could be deadly.)

After two years, Winiarski felt he had learned everything that he could at Souverain, so he left. He was then hired as the first winemaker at Robert Mondavi Winery, the first new winery to be built in Napa Valley since the repeal of Prohibition. Robert Mondavi's Oakville winery was still under construction at the time and the chaotic conditions offered a different kind



Nathan Fay, left and Warren Winiarski, Right. Photo by Andrée Abecassis, 1987 By permission of the Winiarski Family

of practical winemaking experience. A nimble mind and an ability to improvise were essential job requirements. Winiarski learned valuable life lessons there too. “Bob taught me that no goal was so lofty that it could not be exceeded.”

Winiarski compares his time at Souverain and Robert Mondavi Winery to climbing ever-taller peaks. “They were my guided lesser peaks, and Ivancie was my attempt at a solo.” Gerald Ivancie was a Colorado periodontist with wine dreams of his own. Ivancie’s initial idea was to

purchase California grapes and transport them in refrigerated trucks to Denver to make wine there. Familiar with Napa Valley’s grape quality and of Winiarski’s reputation as a “man who knew about where to get good grapes,” Ivancie lured him away from Mondavi to do everything

from finding the grapes to making the wine. The lessons Winiarski learned from training on the “lesser peaks,” combined with his own constant self-education, would stand him in good stead.

By the time Ivancie came along with his consulting proposal, Winiarski had been poking around many of Napa Valley’s nooks and crannies looking for the ideal spot to grow top-quality Cabernet. He and Barbara had already purchased and planted Cabernet on a three-acre property up on Howell Mountain, but he had doubts about whether that land could produce the refined style of wine that he held in his mind’s eye.

Enter Nathan Fay.

Fay was a grower, not a commercial winemaker, but he made a little hobby wine from the vines he’d planted back in ’61. When Winiarski came by to talk about an irrigation system in 1969, the affable Fay asked if he would like to taste his 1968 vintage wine. It was homemade, only a year old, but vinified from Fay’s Stags Leap Cabernet grapes. Winiarski might not have expected much, but “even before the first sip, just from the aromatics of the wine in the room, the wine spoke to me,” he has recounted. “It said, ‘Listen to me, I’m talking to you’... (and) I said, ‘That’s it; that’s the grape that satisfies what I believe to be the most expressive of the variety.’”

For Winiarski, “most expressive” meant that those Stags Leap grapes had the potential to not only reflect their regional distinctiveness, their terroir, but could also achieve widely recognizable

“classical characteristics of greatness, if properly vinified.” Stags Leap District was the Cabernet Sauvignon sweet spot he had been seeking.

By chance, the Heid Ranch adjoining Fay’s property was available. So, sparked by Winiarski’s “ah ha” moment over that homemade wine, the Winiarskis sold their Howell Mountain property. With the help of that seed money, contributions from Winiarski’s mother, and a few other investors, the Stag’s Leap Vineyard “adventure” began in 1970.

Through the years, Winiarski and Fay often talked about their shared affections: wine and agriculture. They also worked together on establishing the historic Napa Valley Agriculture Preserve in 1968, the first legislation of its kind in the United States. The preserve continues to protect the agricultural nature of the valley by restricting development.

But the two men had vastly different ambitions about winemaking. Winiarski wanted to make one of the world’s best wines, and he most assuredly did. Fay never went in that direction. Although people would try to interest him in building a winery, he preferred working in the vineyard, selling his grapes to others, and making wine primarily for his own enjoyment.

Winiarski later reflected on his friend’s decision to plant what he planted, where he planted it, and when he planted it. “Nathan possessed real daring and pioneering spirit to do what he did. It’s lonely, if you think of it... You might

say a whole decade passes before the sense of what this land can produce when planted to this varietal is at all visible. That’s about a third of a man’s adult working life... This is a highly venturesome, speculative endeavor. But while the risk of missing the mark is great, the promise of a new, beautiful, sun-lit success sustains the spirit.”

“People did recommend to Nathan that he plant Cabernet,” Winiarski said. “But I don’t think any of these people were certain of the outcome. How could they be? ...The important thing is that no matter how good one’s recommendations may be, they do not change the character and the magnitude of the risk and the quality of daring that was involved in cultivating an untried variety in this unproven area.”

Dorothy J. Gaiter is Senior Editor of Grape Collective, an online magazine for which she and her husband, John Brecher, coauthor a biweekly column. They have been studying and enjoying wine since 1973. After long careers as award winning, hard-news journalists, they conceived and wrote The Wall Street Journal’s wine column, “Tastings,” from 1998 to 2010. In 2020, the couple donated their papers to the Warren Winiarski Wine Writers Collection at UC-Davis. Gaiter has had a distinguished career as a reporter, editor, columnist and editorial writer at The Miami Herald and The New York Times as well as at The Journal. They have written four wine books and are best known for Open That Bottle Night, an annual, international celebration of wine and friendship. ■

30TH Annual Wine Seminar

“Napa Valley’s Old Vines and the Wines They Give Us”

SATURDAY, MAY 15, 2021 VIA ZOOM

Moderator: Tegan Passalacqua

Historical Overview: Kelli White

Panelists: Mike Hirby, *Relic Wine Cellars*; Bob Biale, *Robert Biale Vineyards*

Tegan Passalacqua, *Turley Wine Cellars*

Morgan Twain-Peterson, *Bedrock Wine Company*; Rosemary Cakebread, *Gallica*



A MIX OF ZOOM AND LIVE INTERVIEWS FOLLOW FOR EACH OF THE PRESENTERS:

Kelli White, sommelier, author, educator, and vintner

Historical Overview of Winegrowing In Napa Valley



Moderator Tegan Passalacqua, welcomed everyone to NVWLA’s first wine seminar via Zoom and its 30th Annual Wine Seminar overall. The 30th had presented several challenges, not the least of which, after two postponements, was how to taste all the wines to be discussed.

The day before the program, Tegan filled, stoppered and labeled 50 sets of five wines, and set them in paper bags on the back of a truck on the crush pad at Turley Wine Cellars. Attendees began arriving promptly at 9:00 am to pick up their wines.

Our seminar began with Tegan’s delight in how the pick-ups had gone—so many familiar faces, masked and unmasked. “It quite made my week,” he said and thanked everyone for stopping by.

In Tegan’s introduction of Kelli he also included her most recent achievement of “new mother!” Kelli White grew up in Charlton, Massachusetts, studied math and science in high school, changed to history of art at Brandeis, worked in its art museum and then the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, Texas. Inexorably, wine shops took hold. We find her having made two trips to France and working at Veritas in New York when she was hired away to develop the wine program at PRESS Restaurant in Saint Helena with her fiancé (now husband), Scott Brenner. Six months later, Kelli began writing *Napa Valley Then and Now* with Scott taking all its “Now” photographs. Readers may remember Kelli’s Books on Wine Evening with NVWLA in January of 2016. From PRESS Kelli went to GuildSomm and is now head of education for Pacific Union Company. In 2011, she and her husband also founded their Houndstooth Wine brand.

For providing an overarching viticultural history that is actually a very long history of 250 years in ten minutes, Kelli likened to speed dating. And with that ukase, she began:

Discussing fine wine, she said, is mainly talking about fruit from the grapevine species, *vitis vinifera*. America's colonizing forces from Europe found our native grapevines "unsuitable" for making wine. Historically, we find cuttings of *vinifera* coming in in a variety of ways, introduced into the Eastern United States and Canada by the French, English, and even the Russians.

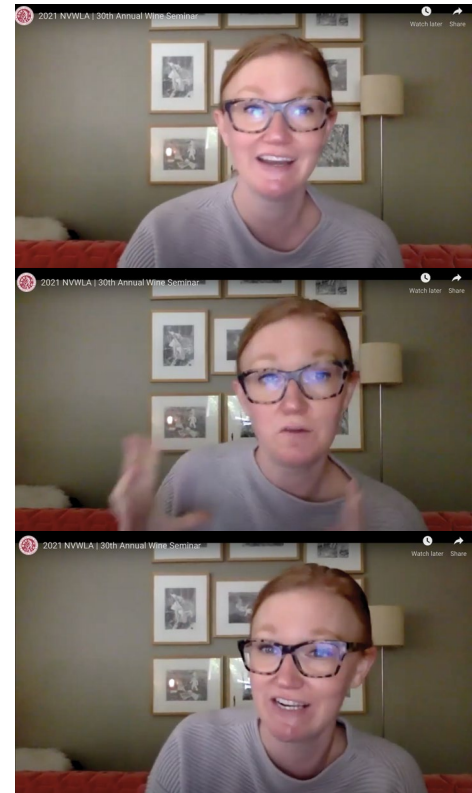
But, when it comes to California, we are talking about the Spanish. Their introduction of wine grapes from Spain came first to the Canary Islands, then South America and Mexico, and then up the West Coast of California as far as Sonoma. Catholic missionaries established their network of missions by first building a church and then planting a vineyard for making sacramental wine. These vineyards were planted with the Listan Prieto variety, now effectively extinct in continental Spain but still found in the Canaries, as a major grape in South America, and here and there in California. Its nearly exclusive planting at the missions earned it the name of "Mission" and in the winter of 1838 or 1839 George Yount planted his own vineyard to it.

In 1821, Alta California had come under the jurisdiction of Mexico. In 1830, Mexico had begun secularizing all its missions, thus taking away the exclusivity of winemaking from the clergy and opening the door to the general population for commercialization of

wine production. The War with Mexico in 1846-1848 was nearly simultaneous with the discovery of gold in California in 1849. There is something infectious about gold strikes, Kelli observed, and people came in from everywhere by wagon and ship to try their luck. The unlucky fell back on their old professions. Professional European winemakers and growers were actually in California in the 1850's and 1860's and by the 1880's they had been incredibly successful in establishing vineyards and wineries. There were more than 100 wineries in Napa Valley alone, a number Napa wouldn't reach again for 100 years.

Different types of *vinifera* were brought in from Europe to New England to be grown in greenhouses. There were many pathways of entry, in fact, and a variety of scholarship continues today tracing the extent. In Napa, Riesling-based whites and Zinfandel-based reds were successful early on, but a great many more varieties were tried as well. Winegrowing was really chaotic. What should be grown where was more about the owner than the site. Eventually there was a paring down, forcibly organized during Prohibition. Additionally, we have the 1890's depression, phylloxera tearing through (why American rootstocks are now planted world-wide), and the Temperance Movement leading to Prohibition. All this had an alternative effect on vineyards, which proliferated.

During Prohibition, the head of household could produce 200 gallons of non-intoxicating (virtually unenforceable) fruit juice a year.



Kelli White, Historian

Winemaking became incredibly popular all across the country. Carloads of wine were shipped by rail everywhere, but only certain varieties were robust enough to make the journey. These came to be known

as “shipper” varieties. By 1926, the varietal composition of Napa Valley was 40% Alicante Bouschet 30% Petite Sirah, 16% Zinfandel, and 13% Carignane. Each variety brought a little something to the blend, and percentages varied, but our vineyards were planted to *all* “shipper” or “mixed black” varieties, dark, full-flavored, sturdy, high-producing, ideal for the journey into the bathtubs and sinks around the country. Total grapevine plantings had actually *increased*. But Gold Rush Europeans growing and making wine had aged out of the game and when Prohibition was repealed in 1932, we were in the middle of the Great Depression. It took years to recover. And because wine was a quasi-luxury item, it took all the more time. By the 1960’s, things really began to change once more. It was a slow rebirth as more Americans were drinking more wines. In 1967, for the first time, dry wine beat sweet wine consumption. Our domestic wine scene looked very different from what had come before.

The California sprawl-style prior to Prohibition provided wide space for horse-drawn ploughs in the vine rows, and reduced competition for water among the vines. With the advent of drip irrigation in the 1970’s, French varieties, specifically Bordeaux varieties in Napa Valley, came in. The drip-style actually accelerated planting as European varieties were much less drought-tolerant. A more modern Bordeaux style planting was adopted with its fruiting zones all in a line on the trellising. California is still finding

itself: varietal experimentation, mixed vineyards. In the 1980’s, Chardonnay was the most widely planted variety in Napa Valley; Cabernet didn’t take the lead until 1992 and forward. A Cab catalyst had been the return of phylloxera. AXR-I rootstock proved insufficiently resistant to the louse.

It is a costly endeavor to replant in this modern Bordeaux-style planting, but with it came a renewed interest in red wine. There had been a massive impact on consumer trends in 1991 when *60 Minutes* broadcast “The French Paradox.” It basically asked ‘how come with eating so much cheese the French weren’t dead? Why? The answer: red wine!’ This finding led to a cultural shift in our country. An *Etch A Sketch*-like clean shake to our vineyards once again brought transformation.

The old vine vineyards of the old vine shipper varieties that were own-rooted or on St George rootstock had proven immune to phylloxera in the AXR-I shakedown of the 1980’s and have lived to tell their tale. Old vines is something Kelli is really passionate about. And not only old vineyards but the wines they produce. These she finds are really interesting and different and they speak to deep and sometimes forgotten wine grapes in California viticulture. These are a vanishing species needing our support: the wines, the people behind them, and the grape growers. They continue to withstand strong economic pressures to be replaced, yet the old vines have lived to tell their tales. They are historic treasures, philosophical statements in a glass. ■



Mike Hirby,
Owner and Winemaker,
Relic Wine Cellars

*The Archive 2019 Calistoga
Alfred Frediani Vineyard
Carignane—Old Vines, 9 cases*



The focus at Relic, Mike Hirby was quick to say, is old vines and its heroes are those who made wine the old way, with historical techniques: native yeast, whole cluster fermentation—natural, beautiful, harmonious.

Mike grew up in Wisconsin and had really gotten into cooking thanks to his Italian grandmother. In college he studied music and philosophy at Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO. Despite his parents being teetotalers, Mike had

spent a weekend in Napa just before the start of his senior year. Once back at college, he went to work for “Primitivo Wine Bar and Restaurant” that had opened in 1997 with 350 wines, 26 by the glass. Mike was only on the wait staff but soon put graduate school off in order to taste wines with restaurant principal Alan Manley. After a year, Mike had taken over managing the restaurant’s cellar and in two was sommelier (he says he loves to eat with a creative mind). When Primitivo closed three years after Mike left, it had a wine list of 2,200 wines, 45 by the glass.

In 2000, Mike had been offered a job in Southern France working with Rosé and Mourvedre, and another in Northern Spain with Grenache, but chose instead to visit and talk with as many winemakers in those two countries as he could, and then moved to Napa Valley when he came home. By July he had an internship after calling a telephone number on the label of a bottle in a Calistoga wine shop: a Petite Sirah by Behrens & Hitchcock. After harvest, Mike stayed on as Assistant Winemaker for Les Behrens and his wife, Lisa Drinkward, who had both been doing everything at their winery. Four months later they hired a business manager, Schatzi Throckmorton. And two years later, Mike and Schatzi started Relic Wine Cellars as a custom crush client.

Behrens & Hitchcock—Behrens Family Winery, today—is at the top of Spring Mountain and has been making wine since 1993. Les has always



been winemaker, Lisa now coordinates vineyard care and contracts, and Schatzi is General Manager. The winery has quite a wine cellar where Mike was introduced to Alder Springs in Mendocino County and later to its founder, Stu Bewley (Relic continues to make an Alder Springs Syrah).

In 2002, Mike joined REALM as its winemaker for 9 years and in 2004, Rockledge Vineyards for four with Peter and Linda Snowden. Today, in addition to Relic, Mike is with DR Stephens Estate, Husic Family Vineyards, Sarocka Estate, and Implicit Cellars.

Mike makes 15 wines a year for Relic in his determination to be true to the microclimate of several special vineyards. Fruit for his seminar Carignane comes from the 20 acre Al Frediani Vineyard planted in Calistoga by Al in 1939 when he was 18 (he died in 2018). Al had



*Left, Old Vine Carignane
Alfred Frediani Vineyard, Calistoga 2019
Photo by Tim Carl Photography
Above: Mike Hirby, Relic Wine Cellars*

planted Cabernet Sauvignon, Carignane, Valdiguié, and Petite Sirah. Mike characterized the vineyard as “110 years old vines, organic, some of the best dirt in Napa Valley.” It’s vines are dry farmed, head-trained, and “big with big berries.”

The Carignane is foot stomped, fermented whole cluster in open top fermenters, followed by a two-week maceration—Mike says the wine needs the stems—in order to bring extra phenols to one’s mid-palate. These are exotic aromatics: the wine comes fully into its own in ten years. Mike went on to say there was so much heart in the old traditions—the connection to the past—it is hard to fathom. These esters are actual, but the taste, the smell—it’s pretty abstract. Behrens Family Winery bottling is custom, a visiting bottling line run by professionals that Mike calls super-clean and *regular* (i.e. the labels all go on straight).



Mike Hirby, left and Schatzi Throckmorton, right
Photo by Tim Carl Photography

Originally, Mike had asked Jim Frediani if his Grenache was available and Jim had said, ‘No, but my uncle has Petite Sirah.’ As Jim was just about to leave town for a few weeks he said he’d tell his uncle and one month later Al called Mike to invite him ‘to look at his “Pets”’. Al’s son Steve now manages his father’s vineyard. The rest of the Frediani family vineyards are managed by Jim and planted to Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Charbono, Grenache, a mixed block, plus Carignane, and Petite Sirah. Mike says their all over notes of rosemary and thyme give a distinct *terroir* impression. Plus, the crude fractured volcanics of the soil out of Simmons Canyon on Pickett Road bring a strong sense of *terroir* as well. As Antonio Galloni wrote about these vines:

Theirs is the fruit that fed the vats that forged Napa Valley’s reputation from scratch. They are our link to the past, a reminder that Napa’s agricultural and viticultural landscape was once much more diverse than it is today. They are the witnesses, the record-keepers, the very backs that built Napa.

Antonio Galloni, Vinous | Explore All Things Wine, “Old Vines, Deep Roots: Calistoga’s Frediani Family”

In 2014, Relic broke ground off Soda Springs Road for a cave and in 2015 began to build a 2-storey winery, tasting room and offices. Relic is also trying to plant two acres of a field blend of Grenache, Petite Sirah, Mourvedre, Zinfandel, and Alicante Bouschet on the same site. May this venture’s vines thrive. ■



**Bob Biale, Founding Owner
Robert Biale Vineyards**
2018 Oak Knoll Aldo’s Vineyard
Zinfandel, 320 cases



Bob Biale grew up in Napa helping his father Aldo farm the family’s property. His grandfather Aldo had planted a vineyard to Zinfandel and eight other varieties in 1937, but lost his life just as the vines were beginning to produce. Suddenly, in 1942 a teenaged Aldo found himself managing the family land—selling chickens, wine grapes, prunes, and eggs as well as

caring for the crops. 11 years later, at a wedding in Italy, young Aldo met his own future bride. They married in Italy and moved to the family farm in Napa where they would raise Bob, his brother and sister.

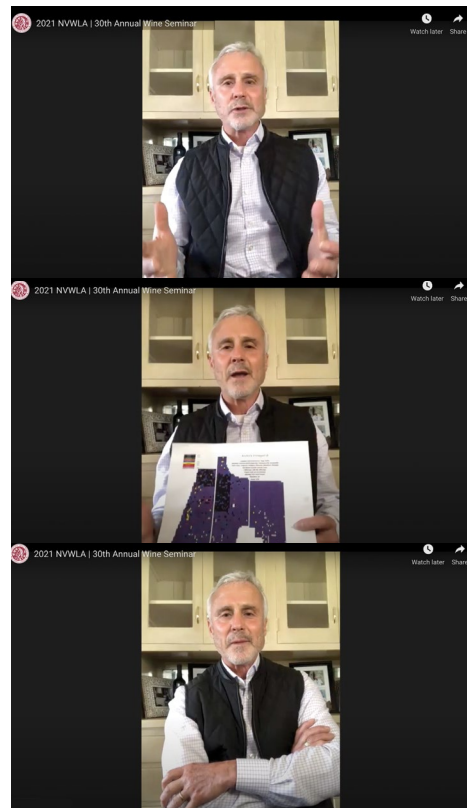
In 1961, Bob's grandmother increased their vineyard land by over a dozen acres in a bold land swap. (At the time the vineyard parcels were in Napa County but are now within the City of Napa.) Growers back then made the choices of what to plant according to what they thought would do well, Bob observed. The southern district of Oak Knoll is cooler than Saint Helena. Its fruit has a higher acid base and produces bright, brisk fruit. Besides Zinfandel, the other most often planted variety was Early Burgundy (Abouriou). Lots of growers in Napa had vineyards of Early Burgundy (now all gone), with fewer as one goes north.

Biale fruit was sold to local producers until Bob, his dad and Dave Pramuk, a close friend of Bob's, went into business as Robert Biale Vineyards in 1991 with Al Perry as winemaker. In 1999, Dave and Bob went to work full-time for Biale. Bob hadn't exactly trained for vineyard management. After college he had joined the US Navy and specialized in sonar and the theory of anti-submarine warfare from a helicopter. Stationed in San Diego, Bob was also actively, if secondarily, involved in search and rescue. After the Navy he joined the Capuchin Friars and spent three years in Papua New Guinea, which instilled in him a strong sense of duty. Bob then took a graduate degree at Dominican University in San Rafael

while helping with the farm. After completing his studies he began working the swing shift at Beringer Brothers.

In 1976, although the Judgment of Paris was good news in general, Bob knows that lots of beautiful old vineyards were removed and replanted to Bordeaux and Burgundy varieties as a result. In the 1960's growers weren't making a lot of money and some buyers had run out of money to pay them! But now, the introduction of new varieties began to inch up prices. Bob said the Judgment gave confidence to wineries to persuade growers to change, convert, even be paid to do so. But Aldo, the Fredianis, and a few other like-minded Italian families resisted replanting because of the deep, deep love for what they had. They simply didn't want to change. When there is something good in the ground, why change it?

In 1991, however, Napa Valley Cooperative Winery was slow to pay. Loyalty had carried everyone along for a while, but as Bob knows, growers really need a home. Bob said the E. & J. Gallo Winery had been the biggest purchaser from the 1940's, 60's, 70's—buying half of what Napa Valley produced: largely Petite Sirah, Zinfandel and Carignane. Bob ultimately persuaded his father to change from just grower to both grower and producer. It took time, but Aldo had had another deep love: to do something on his own.



Bob Biale, Robert Biale Vineyards



Old Vine Zinfandel

Aldo's Vineyard

Oak Knoll District, 2016

Photograph by: Dave "Coach" Todd

Biale began contracting fruit from other vineyards among Aldo's friends, old grower relationships and family members: a patchwork of contracts. Biale planted more Zinfandel grapes in place of prunes and Bob said then things really took off, and the Zinfandel philosophy at Biale progressed right along with it. Bob thinks it has really evolved from a view very different from now but the commitment to Old Vines hasn't waived despite there being some serendipity to working with Old Vines and coordinating the timing for all the grower contracts. The vineyard manager must have a great understanding of a winemaker's needs—what are we trying to achieve? Where are the vines planted and how they are farmed? Farming properly gives each vineyard a unique flavor profile, a strong voice. And that Bob manages the care of the 3 Biale home ranches has earned him the growers' respect.

'And here we are, 24 wines later! 15 are single vineyard, 15 expressions of where the wine is coming from,' as Bob put it. Biale wants to showcase the vineyards, to give them a voice to speak with as each has something different to say. Biale doesn't want to smother the voice of the vineyard; it wants the wines to be "speaking of the place." With Old Vine wines there is a concentration of flavors, layers of complexity; they differ widely with where the vines are planted and how they are farmed. The Napa Valley is an extraordinary place as Bob describes it, with its ring of volcanoes, its proximity to the Coast. One can stand anywhere and find 3 or 4 different soil types. The beauty of Napa that only God can create—it is just brilliant.

After ten years of its wines being made at other wineries, Biale bought the present site in 2001 and in 2004 moved in. Its case production is 14,000-15,000 cases. The Aldo's Vineyard Zinfandel is mostly Zinfandel with a tad of Sangiovese, some Barbera—15 different varieties in all. (Bob noted that in Sonoma County Mike Officer has a vineyard with 28 different varieties!) It is punched down but not pumped over. There is just the one general pressing, and Biale leaves a lot back in the press. It is aged in 25% new French oak—French oak barrel grain is tighter than the American—so as not to cover up any flavor. Bob says this Old Vine wine remains fairly elegant and ages fairly well. Bob grew up drinking wine; he can't remember not tasting wine with every family meal. It was and is the most natural thing. ■



**Tegan Passalacqua, Winemaker
Turley Wine Cellars**

*2018 Saint Helena Hayne Vineyard
Zinfandel, 650 cases*



Tegan Passalacqua joined Turley Wine Cellars in 2003 as a harvest intern. He was then invited to stay on and did. Since 2013, Tegan has been Turley's Head Winemaker and Vineyard Manager with the agreeable challenge of being responsible for the making of 47 wines from 50 vineyards in California.

After college and while taking wine and vine courses at night in Napa, Tegan worked in local winery labs. He was next in New Zealand as a cellar rat, during which time Turley offered him internship. Before joining Turley, Tegan remembers being particularly impressed by a Lamborn Family Vineyards Zinfandel from Heidi Barrett and single-vineyard Zinfandels of Joel Gott's from Amador and Lodi Counties.

As Tegan also took on the project of an old house in married life, he made a connection between old vines and Victorian houses, in seeing their potential: old carpentry built to last, old vines trained to last—sustainable planting, dry-farmed, hardy. He lauds the old vine fruit’s superior colors, stability, higher acids, thicker skins, greater resistance to yeast and other bacteria. In fact, he finds old vines awe-inspiring. There’s not a lot that one needs do, he says, besides letting the vines do their own thing.

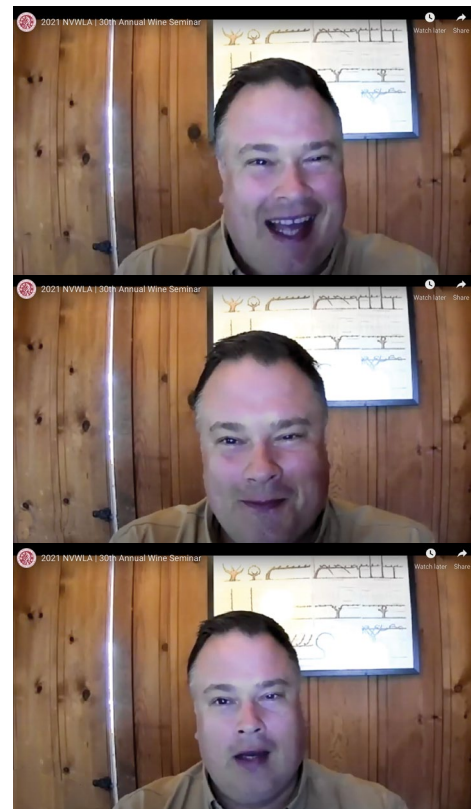
Might new vineyards be thought to be more powerful than Mother Nature? Tegan asked one to consider all the robust trellising, lots of steel, lots of irrigation hose and supports, tight vine spacing—all the impedimenta for vertical shoot positioning (VSP) of the vines. He likens modern vines to modern professional football players: both have an 18-year contract. In the new vineyards, water and nutrients are administered through drip emitters. Vine productivity steadily declines. Shoots and canes can only perform if they are intensively nourished and supported. This is far different from the 8 to 12 arms radiating off the main trunk of a head-trained 50-year-old vine.

Such an old vine may also be own-rooted. Phylloxera started to spread in the 1850’s, reaching Sonoma County in 1870. Resistant rootstock was sought for grafting. Feral vine roots from the mid-west and riverbanks are not appetizing to the wood louse. And certain California regions are naturally resistant, such as Contra Costa County, Lodi and Amador. There

the soils are sandy, decomposed granite. Their high silica content is thought to be an irritant to the wood lice, so own-vine rooting is successful.

Tegan then mentioned La Tâche in Romanée-Conti. He said its wines after 1943 don’t taste the same since the winery’s change in rootstock. Wines from old vine vineyards simply do not taste like new vine wines: you can tell the difference between fruit from vines that are trellised [95% of old vine vineyards are head-trained (called arbello in Sicily)], with drip irrigation, and planted in more places than perhaps should have had vines planted on them...

In 1993, Turley Wine Cellars began making Zinfandel from Hayne Vineyard. The property was acquired by the Bourn family in 1872 and a widowed Sarah Bourn and her son William developed its vineyard. William’s sister Maud married William Alston Hayne in 1899 and Hayne great-grandchildren own the property today. The Zinfandel vines were planted in 1902—1903, after phylloxera had come through the valley. Also planted were Trousseau Noir, Petite Syrah, Carignane, and Flame Tokay. Hayne Vineyard has a special place in the Turley portfolio for Tegan. Its vines grow in Cortina soils on the western bench of Napa Valley running from just north of Yountville’s Napanook, through To-Kalon, Inglenook, Corison, Hayne, over to just above Spottswoode. Tegan calls the run “a really neat place to grow grapes.”



Tegan Passalacqua, Turley Wine Cellars

Hayne Vineyard Zinfandel ripens early, generally around September 5 – 8. Its pH and TA’s are very consistent at 3.55 to 3.65. Tegan then asked Kelli to ask him whatever she wished about the wine.

Kelli: Are you co-fermenting? Picking everything together?

Tegan: Yes, but the Flame Tokay all gets eaten! It was once the number one table grape in America, meant for the pickers to eat. It was the Gatorade of its era when one picked all-day back then. Before these amazing crews of today, people picked from daybreak to end of the day into lug boxes. They worried much less about condition. One of Professor Violetti's reviews recommended that the grapes be left in the lug boxes overnight and crushed the next morning. That way the lugs would come in at 55°F at the winery. Otherwise, at the end of the day they'd be 85°F and there'd be a freight train of fermentation.

Kelli: How is the wine made? How do you treat it in the cellar?

Tegan: The fruit comes in cold and is destemmed. It is un-inoculated with yeast, unfinned, and unfiltered. It is pumped over once a day until fermentation gets going on its own, but Hayne Vineyard Zinfandel is given an extended fermentation because of its structure. It spends 30 days in the tank—it's our only wine to do so because of the perfume, the structure. It's from an area in upper Napa Valley known for gravels and an acid/tannin synergy that comes from growing in an outflow of Sulphur Creek. Rosemary's vineyard has these characteristics as well. The Zinfandel is aged in 20% new French oak, racked maybe once, and bottled.

Kelli: Why the extended maceration? Because of that unique structure?

Tegan: Yes, because of its acid/tannin synergy. It can be picked as early as August. This vintage finished at 3.52pH and 16% alcohol.

Kelli: Because it is dry-farmed, might it perform better in extreme weather conditions?

Tegan: Yes, the vines have a "seen it before" quality. They are not reliant on artificial root zones. The vines are cross-cultivated: a tractor is driven both ways through the vineyard, be it disc, spader, or cultivator, pruning off the surface roots. If the vines are strung up along an irrigation line, the roots are shallow and can't be cultivated. The roots are like fish all coming up to feed at the top of a tank. The vine row is so focused and more tender, more in tune with a direct climate specific within that year. The vines are unbuffered, unlike the old, deeper-rooted vines. In a sense, irrigation allows vines to bite off more than they can chew. I don't know a dry-farmed, self-regulating vineyard that sets a crop level it can't bring to maturity.

Kelli: Zinfandel had a bad reputation in consumer circles. But you have been quite transparent about its natural high acidity and alcohol levels because of the unusual way it ripens.

Tegan: Zinfandel, historically, doesn't ripen evenly. Within the cluster it can vary between 19° and 31° Brix (We picked the 2018 at 25°). You find green shot, regular berries, even a variety



Old Vine Zinfandel, Hayne Vineyard, Saint Helena

of raisination. This Brix range in the same cluster is a source of complexity in the wine and its acidity has helped Zinfandel persist in California viticulture. Pinot Noir and Cabernet really took off once we had modern refrigeration techniques in the cellar, and it was a plus for other, even more tender wines. When André Tchelistcheff came to Beaulieu [in 1938], he's said to describe its whites and reds as awful, the Zinfandel, which he was known to say he hated, OK, and the fortified wines OK as well. This was when it might be 90°F in the Beaulieu cellars at the time.

Larry Turley was drawn to old vines and making his own wines. He retired as an emergency room physician after 25 years, rather than the average 8. With that experience he could save anything! He had started Frog's Leap with John Williams in 1981, but Larry likes to turn everything up to 11, be it hot sauce, car exhaust, or vehicle paint. It is just the way he is and his wines reflect that zest.

Larry had first liked a red blend of Trentadue Winery's and one of Ridge's from the Whitten Ranch in Geyserville. Through organic farming

one gets back to the fundamentals of farming: mindful of inputs and giving back, always asking yourself, 'Are you being a good steward?' The first tenet of farming is: You need to make a nickel. Probably 70% of Napa's wineries do not, and that is just not a sustainable endeavor.

Tegan thinks Bedrock is close to Turley in its present attention to vineyards. Since Turley's initial offering of three Zinfandels, two Petite Syrahs and one Sauvignon Blanc in 1993, it has farmed organically. It now has 50 vineyards under contract and makes 8 times more wines than when it began. Kelli asked which was his favorite vineyard. Tegan answered unhesitatingly: Hayne Vineyard. ■



**Morgan Twain-Peterson MW,
Co-Owner and Winemaker
Bedrock Wine Company**
*2019 Oakville Farmhouse Red Wine,
175 cases*

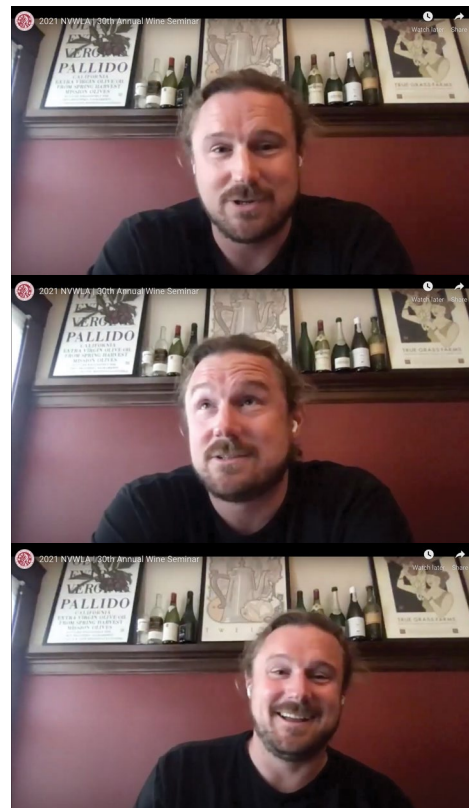
Morgan Twain-Peterson is known for having made his first wine when he was five years old,



in 1986. It was a Pinot Noir from Los Carneros made from fruit given to him by the Sangiacomo family in Sonoma. Apparently by then, Morgan could already tell Zinfandel from Pinot Noir and was determined to ferment his Pinot Noir fruit in the style of Domaine Dujac. Incredibly enough, his wine, *Vino Bambino Pinot Noir*, was on wine lists thereafter at a variety of restaurants for 15 years, until production ceased.

The Bambino was made at Ravenswood Winery, which Morgan's dad, Joel Peterson, had started in 1976 while running the bacteriology lab at Sonoma Valley Hospital. Morgan has only the pleasantest memories and associations with Napa Valley from accompanying his father to various vineyards in the area for Ravenswood and sometimes treated to an Orangina at Oakville Grocery en route. He says he adored those trips that took them from Dickerson Vineyard in Oakville, up to Knights Valley, over to Dry Creek, to the Russian River Valley, and home. Production was less than 1,000 cases.

Dickerson Vineyard was planted in Rutherford in 1920 on St. George rootstock, its 8' x 8' spacing pruned to California sprawl. Ravenswood made a single vineyard Zinfandel from it every year from 1982 until 2018. Tegan and Morgan concur that this was one of the longest runs ever for an Old Vine Zinfandel wine—and one of Ravenswood's most popular Zinfandels from a single vineyard. After the sale of Ravenswood in 2019, Joel took up Zinfandel once more with his own new venture, *Once & Future*, and the making of Zinfandel from Dickerson Vineyard.



*Morgan Twain-Peterson MW,
Bedrock Wine Company*

In 2005, after Vassar for undergraduate and Columbia for graduate studies, Morgan returned to Ravenswood for harvest. Production by then had grown to 400,000 cases. Morgan took the next year to work harvests in Australia and then



*Oakville Farmhouse Vineyard
Oakville, 2017*

Bordeaux. By 2007 he had founded Bedrock Wine Company with Chris Cottrell, whom he had met in New York while working as the buyer for a wine store, and they had become best friends.

The Bedrock Vineyard Morgan's father had recently bought in Sonoma turned out to have 33 acres planted in 1888 with 28 different varieties. These old mixed vineyards in California Morgan characterized as 'really individual terroirs writ large.' One should think of the mix as an entity rather than by the recitation of all its varietal components. Bedrock now works with about 20 vineyards planted pre-1920, documenting all the varieties and steadily improving their health. He and Chris have also gone on to found Under the Wire for sparkling wines, and Morgan is a founding member of the Historic Vineyard Society.

After Oakville Farmhouse Vineyard sold in 2012, its new owners telephoned Morgan, as

they really didn't know how best to proceed with their new Old Vine Vineyard. Tegan had already introduced Morgan to Eugene Kirkham, co-owner of Casa Nuestra, and Morgan had thoroughly enjoyed getting to know its Old Riesling and Chenin Blanc. Coincidentally, Gene was a member of the family that had owned the Oakville Farmhouse Vineyard until its sale. And it had sold to friends of a friend of Morgan's. So the new owners readily got in touch with Morgan to help decide what to do about this 2.5 acre vineyard last planted in the 1930's.

Surrounded by illustrious neighbors, kitty corner to Far Niente with Promontory above, the new owners wondered, 'Do we tear it all out and plant Cab?' Morgan made a desperate plea for leaving it be. He considered its incredibly unique varieties and the wine they made a portrait of Old Napa, and his plea was successful. The new owners thought the vineyard was pretty cool in its uniqueness. In 2013 the vineyard was mapped with the help of UC Davis Foundation Plant Services and polymerase chain reaction (PCR) analyses. Its 17 interplanted varieties in part consist of: Négrette (Pinot Saint George), Petite Sirah, Zinfandel, Mondeuse, Carignane, Chenin Blanc, Columbard, Malvasia Bianca, Semillon, and five Muscat Homburg vines. These last-named Morgan says are delicious and just pre-harvest simply vanish, eaten with an appreciative zest by the picking crew.

In the late 1870's, Morgan reminded us, phylloxera was devastating American wine country. Our state's Board of State Viticultural

Commissioners was formed in 1880 to find out how to combat the disease at home to better position our wines in the worldwide market of the 1880's and '90's. Commissioner Charles A. Wetmore of Livermore recommended we move away from the Mission variety grown in 90% of California's vineyards and by 1890, 80% of our vineyards were planted to other varieties. Nurserymen were traveling all over the world scouting wine grape varieties. By 1890, Hamilton Walker Crabbe most famously had planted 300 different varieties at his estate, "To-Kalon," in Oakville. Crabbe's Black Burgundy, actually Mondeuse or Refosco, is prominent at Farmhouse (and maybe in Aldo's Vineyard, too). One of the Farmhouse varieties has no previously known DNA profile!

Although there is zero Oakville Cabernet Sauvignon in his Oakville Farmhouse Red Wine Morgan says its nose reeks of Oakville: the cassis, the dust; it has more kinship with the wine from nearby MacDonald brothers' MacDonald Vineyard old vines than it has differences. The wine ferments un-inoculated and its unique microflora convey an intensity of place.

Morgan's vinous appetite garnered him a Master of Wine diploma in 2017, the second MW in California and 45th in the United States. Eclipsing that award, however, has been the joy of working with his dad, Joel, who makes his Once and Future wines at Bedrock, and the arrival of Morgan's son Joel Howard Peterson, born just a year ago. ■



**Rosemary Cakebread,
Owner and Winemaker
Gallica**

*2016 Saint Helena Estate Petite Sirah,
60 cases*



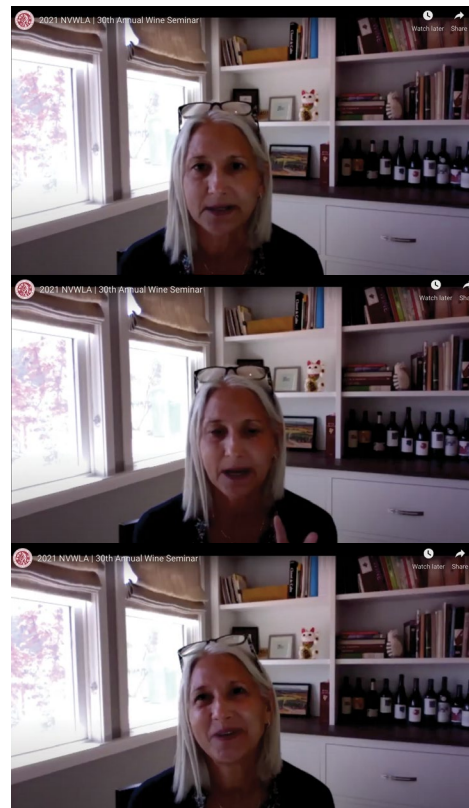
After four years in the international city of Tokyo, Rosemary Cakebread was surprised to find herself starting high school in the much more rural Petaluma, CA—the result of a job transfer for her father, a World Airways pilot. Rosemary found time on her hands. Wonderfully enough, a friend got her a job on the bottling line of Sebastiani Vineyards and Winery in Sonoma, and so began Rosemary's career in wine.

While at Sebastiani, Rosemary got to know her neighbor, Bob Sessions, winemaker for Hanzell Vineyards. Bob told her about the UC Davis wine program and away she went. Rosemary was at UC Davis with future colleagues Heidi Barrett, Eileen Crane, Randall Grahm, Mary Maher, and Doug Shafer (Bruce was a year ahead and they

wouldn't meet until the following year). From UC Davis, Rosemary went to Inglenook Winery in 1979, then spent seven years at Mumm Napa where she was hired away by Spottswoode Estate to oversee the construction of its own winery as well as make its wine. And fortunately for all, Rosemary found she loved construction.

The 1997 and 1998 Spottswoode vintages were made at Napa Wine Company and then its inaugural 1999 at Spottswoode. Rosemary retired from the winery in 2005 to begin her own label of Gallica. 2007 was her first vintage, a classic Cabernet blend. Today, Gallica offers seven wines, two of them Cabernet Sauvignon.

In 1986, Rosemary and Bruce had bought property in a southwest corner of Saint Helena blessed with the gravel soils of Cortina North. They planted an acre of Cabernet Sauvignon—clone 4 on 110R rootstock. They also got to know their neighbors, Matt and Jean St. George, when they found they needed help building a fence. Matt and Jean offered their assistance, and they all became close friends. Matt had built the neighboring St. George weekend house himself, and in 1953-54 he and Jean had planted an acre of vines. They made a homemade wine plus selling fruit to Kent Rosenblum for Rosenblum Cellars and later Dave Phinney for Orin Swift Cellars. In retirement, the St. Georges moved next door full-time. At their death, the children inherited the property and ultimately sold it nine years ago to Rosemary and Bruce, who promised to keep its vineyard.



Rosemary Cakebread, Gallica

In remodeling the neighbors' house, Rosemary was fascinated by what the backhoe brought up during renovations. Its vineyard, planted to Petite Sirah, Carignane and Alicante Bouschet, appeared to be struggling. Many vines were dying or

already dead. Gallica has added Grenache, Syrah and Viognier, but the 50+ year-old vineyard remains 75% Petite Sirah and annually produces one to one and a quarter tons of fruit.

Until buying the St George property, Rosemary's winemaking experience had been chiefly with Cabernet Sauvignon and Sauvignon Blanc. Her old vine vineyard introduction came at Spottswode. Its first winemaker, Tony Soter, had scouted old vine vineyards for Spottswode and found both Frediani Family Vineyards Sauvignon Blanc and Tofanelli Family Vineyard Sémillon in Calistoga. Rosemary followed suit, buying from Gene Frediani and his son Jim, and Pauline Tofanelli and her son Vince (a panelist for our 2019 Wine Seminar). Rosemary loved walking the vineyard with Jim and spending time talking with Pauline.

Now Rosemary was buying every bottle of Petite Syrah from everywhere she could to understand the variety. She became a student of Petite Syrah wine among all her neighbors. Her conclusion? Most of this wine was port-like, which was preventing her from developing a large affinity with the grape variety. The wines were nearly all high in alcohol—made from super ripe fruit for that port-like flavor. One of the very few wines she came back to was from Turley Wine Cellars, a single vineyard Petite Sirah. Rosemary sought out the winemaker and met Tegan because she really wanted to know how the Turley fruit was handled.



*Old Vine Petite Sirah
Gallica Estate, Saint Helena 2021
Photo by: Frances Stockton*

Rosemary wants to honor the place where her Petite Sirah grows, the cobble soil, the amazing wines that come from the area—Hayne, Beckstoffer, Pellet. She admits the care of the old vine Petite Sirah vineyard has now become something of an obsession. The vineyard was irrigated during Dave Phinney's contract; the Cakebreads irrigate once a year and take buckets of shower water out to the two dozen new vines planted more recently.

Petite Sirah is the first red grape to be picked at Gallica, usually at the end of August or at least by Labor Day, so there won't be robust alcohols. The destemmed must spends seven days on its skins in open top stainless fermenters. (Rosemary's first Petite Sirah vintage was

fermented in a plastic half-ton T bin!) She only presses once (no rollers), makes just one daily punch down, and ages the wine in neutral oak barrels, even stainless steel barrels to keep alcohol level low. Rosemary feels the Petite Sirah doesn't need the oak like Cabernet. Lately, she has even been experimenting with stainless for her other reds in order to manage the inevitable alcohol creep in the cellar.

Gallica Petite Sirah spends 13-14 months in barrel; no fining or filtration safeguards the purity of its aromatics, those of "that place." Just one or two barrels of Petite Sirah are produced a year. Rosemary continues to look closely at the fruit each year: What kind of year is it? 2013 was the first vintage of Gallica Petite Sirah, one of the warmer vintages in the Valley. Wrapping her head around the variety, Rosemary eventually realized Petite Sirah shouldn't be treated like Cabernet, but more like Pinot Noir: Cooler fermentation, not long on skins, not overly extracted, for a more elegant style. The 2016 is tasting the best. 2016 was a cooler vintage. The 2018 is still too young but the 2016 has the modest style she likes.

Gallica seeks to make the most elegant, interesting Petite Sirah it can. When Rosemary shows people this wine without its label, they don't know what it is: Is it an old Cab, they wonder? Rosemary says Petite Sirah goes best with fall wine cuisine, the warm, inviting flavors and aromas of roasted pork, roast chicken—Petite Sirah needs fat—and fall vegetables—Thanksgiving, for certain! ■

About the Historic Vineyard Society

Historic Vineyard Society (HVS) was founded in 2011 because, as Morgan elaborated, we were losing a lot of old vineyards, and they were completely undocumented as to content or age. Five old vine spokesmen formed an advocacy group—three of whom took part in the day's Wine Seminar: Tegan, Bob and Morgan. The two other founders are David Gates from Ridge Vineyards and Mike Officer from Carlisle Vineyards & Winery.



Tegan said the HVS founders have created a registry for old vine vineyards, taking our US Government's definition of "historic" as 50 years for the HVS definition. Thus, a vineyard registered with HVS has to have been planted a minimum of 50 years ago from the year of registry. 157 registered vineyards are currently listed on its website. HVS has certainly succeeded in becoming an educational resource for old vine vineyards. Most recently, HVS took a group to visit the Old Kraft Vineyard, planted in the 1890's in Saint Helena on a site near Rosemary's estate vineyard.

Tegan cautioned that old vine vineyards are under threat all over our state—in Lodi, Amador County, Mendocino, Santa Clara, Paso Robles, and the Cienega Valley. In Napa, old vines are under threat from Cabernet; in Lodi, labor costs are bringing on mechanization; and in Santa Clara, it's the demand for housing. . .

Q & A's

Q: In a replant after a vine's death, do you use the same rootstock and clone?

Tegan: HVS would collect all the DNA information on the vines to use the same selection, and then if we know the selection to be clean, historically, we would plant the same

Q: Does HVS have a nursery of old clones?

Tegan: Yes! We are working with UC Davis' Foundation Plant Services to make such vines available, the way ZAP has for Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Saint-Macaire, Trousseau—California selections, biotypes.

Q: What is the oldest Old Vine Vineyard still in commercial production?

Tegan: Deaver Mission Vineyard in Amador County planted in 1854 is believed to be the oldest

Q: What about flavors? Old vs. young from the same clone or variety?

Bob: In general, young vines are more exuberant in their showing; but it is not so much about flavors as it is a monotone; the site is not coming through as expressively as it does in older vines; location has a big affect on flavors. The older the vine, the wider its range of flavors and the greater their concentrations.

These variations have to do with how far the roots are really going down, how strongly they are expressing the site, how much they are gathering up to the surface and into the grapes themselves all these beautiful nutrients and mineralities these old vine vineyards are known for.

Biale Vineyards has cloned older vines; the 1906 Moore Earthquake Zinfandel is planted at Biale. Contrasting its wine with one from RW Moore Vineyard is so amazing. RW Moore, two miles away [planted in the 1900's in Coombsville], is so singular in its profile, so much more expressive of the variety.

Tegan recalled when he was much younger being in Burgundy with a producer, and the producer saying that clones is a young vine conversation; clonal selections are important in the early life of the vineyard but at 25 or 30 years, becomes less of a conversation.

Morgan likened young vines to light beer. He feels their wines are just not at the same level of density as old vine wines; they have a different chemistry. Tegan agreed. He said the older vines are capable of telling one about every nook and cranny of where they are growing. Bob worries about thirsty vines. He applauds the selection of drought tolerant rootstocks. As to non-tilling, he feels that surface vines elimination has its benefits. The newer rootstocks only need go 6' deep! Tegan said there are lots of new discussions among winemakers and vineyard managers. In the mix again are drought tolerance and farming methods.

In conclusion, Tegan read from a speech given at the 1858 California State Agricultural Society by its outgoing president, the Honorable Samuel B Bell of Alameda:

Without agriculture there is no wealth. Gold is not wealth; it is its convenient representative. Commerce produces no wealth — it simply exchanges it. Manufactures and arts re-combine it. Agriculture is the prolific mother of wealth. The rest simply handle it when it is produced and delivered into their hand. ■

Editor's Letter

Dear Reader,

Hats off to Tegan Passalacqua and the Historic Vineyard Society for seeing through to the finish our thoroughly successful 30th Wine Seminar, “Napa Valley’s Old Vine Vineyards and the Wines They Give Us,” with six presenters, five wines, and viewers from at least 20 cities in 3 states, via Zoom.

No sooner had we embarked on the novel task of transcribing notes taken during the seminar, and scheduling interviews with the presenters to provide a bit more depth to the write-up, than Warren Winiarski’s office called to ask if the REPORT would like to publish an article that had appeared in the *Grape Collective* but that Warren wished to have reach a local audience, and had retained all rights so it could.

From fact-checking via the recording of the Zoomed seminar, to the live interviews with as many of the panelists as possible, to having Warren’s indefatigable Diane Denham delve into office files and family scrapbooks for images, the research, writing and editing for this issue of the REPORT proved an absolute delight.

As with our previous issue, the Autumn 2021 REPORT is [available online](#), with a very limited number of copies in print. A donation of \$10.00 secures a paper copy sent via US Mail.

We also want to call attention on the NVWLA website to virtual programs underway with Board Member Jeff Davis who has introduced two series, “Perspectives,” which brings discussions with new and old practitioners to the screen, and “Oral Histories, Past and Present” from Jeff’s ongoing archive of interviews.

And our thanks to Board Member Renée Roberts who partnered with Mount View Hotel & Spa in Calistoga to bring an extraordinary evening *al fresco* with winemakers Heidi and Bo Barrett, wines from Chateau Montelena, the film “Bottleshock”, and the generous hospitality of the hotel, to a medley of most appreciative winers and diners. We look forward to more of these events for you to enjoy in this decade.



Finally, please take note of the April 24, 2022 date for the Annual Grand Tasting. Changing climate has dictated a Sunday earlier in the year for more benign conditions, outdoors in the Grove at Silverado Resort & Spa, Napa.

We look forward to seeing you at the 38th Annual Grand Tasting,

Diana H. Stockton
Editor-in-Chief

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Membership

An annual membership in the Napa Valley Wine Library Association sustains an incomparable collection of wine-related materials at St. Helena Public Library for use by the general public and the opportunity to attend a number of wine education events during the year.

Admission to our Annual Grand Tasting is a benefit of membership as is a subscription to the Napa Valley Wine Library REPORT.

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CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE



P.O. BOX 328
ST. HELENA, CA 94574

ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED

