

NAPA VALLEY WINE LIBRARY **REPORT**



AUTUMN 2015

2016 Calendar of Events

Thursday, January 3 at 7:00 pm

Books on Wine Evening with
Dick Peterson, author of *The Winemaker*
Saint Helena Public Library

Saturday, May 14 from 9:30 to Noon

26th Annual Wine Seminar,
Winemaking in Two Worlds: Napa Valley and South America
EcoLab Theatre, CIA-Greystone, Saint Helena
Lunch venue to be determined

Sunday, August 14 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

54th Annual Tasting
Silverado Resort & Spa, Napa

2015 Winery Alliance Members

Arns Winery
Baldacci Family Vineyards
Cakebread Cellars
Groth Vineyards and Winery
Louis M. Martini Winery
Napa Wine Company
PEJU
Shafer Vineyards
Silver Oak Wine Cellars
Whitehall Lane Winery
William Hill Estate Winery


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Napa Valley Wine Library REPORT

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President's Letter

Dear Friends,

We are just through another harvest in Napa Valley. 'A little light,' most are saying but usually the quality goes up as juice content goes down. This year's picking was very early because of the heat and because of the drought.

We did learn that vineyards make great firebreaks. We heard stories about the Valley Fire out of Lake County of houses saved because the neighbor had planted a few rows of vineyard and turned his sprinklers on. The large vineyard on Perini Hill surely stopped the fire from moving en masse into the nearby town of Lower Lake. (Go to Google Earth...take a look.)



*"Looking Down to Middletown"
Photograph kindness of LaDonn Morgan-Garcia*

Maybe it's time for a little common sense? Hillside vineyards have been stopped by County regulations because they interrupted someone's "view shed." In other words, someone simply didn't want to look at a vineyard. Vineyards, because they are green and spaced with lots of bare dirt, provide firebreaks because they themselves don't burn easily and provide ready access for firefighters and equipment.

The American Indians here long before the grapevines, understood the nature of California's arid, drought-prone landscape. Lightning regularly lit fires that burned the grass and low scrub, clearing out large patches for new grass to grow. If the rainstorms didn't come, the Indians set fires. Usually these fires moved fast enough to leave the big trees unscathed. There are, in fact, some pines that only germinate after a fire. The returning grassland feeds more animals, the hunting is better, everyone prospers. The Indians understood that they were part of the land and therefore part of the process.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY E & J GALLO WINERY

Perhaps it's time to apply a little of this same philosophy to us today. Maybe the current owners of the land are the best ones to plan for the survival of their investment—be that hillside vineyards, fire trails, water development or irrigated grazing land. Maybe it's time to learn to be part of our landscape.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Martini
President



Books on Wine Evening

*Alder Yarrow, **Essence of Wine***

Saint Helena Public Library

Friday, February 20, 2015

Alder Yarrow, author of the award-winning wine blog “Vinography” provided an excellent history of creating his book, *The Essence of Wine*, at our **Books on Wine Evening** in the Napa Valley Wine Library wing of the Saint Helena Public Library on Friday, February 20.

“I feel like Madonna!” exclaimed Alder, looking over the assembled throng as he began his presentation. He said his book tour has been entertaining and fun. Alder self-published his *The Essence of Wine* just before Christmas, and joined us after taking part in the four-day annual Wine Writers Symposium at Meadowood Napa Valley.

Growing up, there was no wine on the table in Alder’s house. His first sip of wine was at a party when he was a teenager. The 1990’s found him taking junior year abroad from Stanford University at Oxford University and eating in Oxford’s colleges with other students, he recalled with a grin, really introduced him to food and wine. He began to cook and to trundle down to the local “Odd Bin” for interesting labels or interestingly shaped bottles--like Mateus and Chianti.

Alder said he graduated from Stanford with degrees in photography and communication knowing HTML, so he went to work helping start a web design company and spending his income on food and wine. Alder’s parallel development as a wine geek had also begun:

keeping notebooks on the wines he tasted. “Ten years of Moleskines!” And two of those ten years he spent in Tokyo where he kept being asked by those he was with to pick out something in the way of wine.

In 2004, new web design clients asked him, “What’s a blog?” And as Alder learned about blogs he realized he could start his own about wine to send to his friends. There were only one or two other wine posts and Googling the name “Vinography” brought up zero search results. Alder called the time “a very green field” for his blog. All fifteen of his friends were visitors to it within two or three weeks and in six months “Vinography” had several thousands of visitors. Alder says he wrote every day, but that initially, 11 plus years ago, what he wrote he thinks were inanities as he started learning and exploring. He now has a six year-old at home, so Alder no longer writes every day (only about 10 to 20 hours on Vinography and 60 hours at the office), but was able to parley writing for his blog into writing for several outlets: Jancis Robinson, the *SOMM Journal* (sommjournal.com), Jim Gordon’s *Opus Vino*, plus lots of speaking engagements—the Food & Wine Classic in Aspen, CIA’s “Flavor! Napa Valley.” This was his tenth year at the Wine Writers Symposium. Wine and “Vinography” have given Alder “. . .something of a second career: As if I were knitting. It is fulfilling, creative.”

Alder then described a parlor game he made up of guessing ice cream flavors. His favorite source for guessing at home is nearby Mitchell’s Ice



Cream in San Francisco. The game consists of choosing a number of ice creams all the same color—he generally picks orange—each a different flavor (especially tropicals) lining them up and then guessing which is which.

He went on to say that it is hard to put words to things we smell and that there is a physiological reason for this. “Taste” is 70 to 95% “smell.” The senses of see, touch, hear go to our language center first, while smell and taste go to the amygdala and hippocampus, very old-fashioned parts of our brain that process emotion and memory. Survival once depended on knowing if something were rotten or safe to eat. Sex, memory—episodic experience is

enmeshed with food; taste and smell. Alder became familiar with UC Davis professor emerita Ann Noble’s Aroma Wheel, which he finds maddening. Why is it round? Why can’t it show different relationships? It doesn’t have half the things he wants and it can’t go into a wallet! A few years ago, Alder posted his own Aroma Card on Vinography. Free to download on his site, it is now in seven languages.

For Alder, “Flavors and aromas are magical, really magical; each a really remarkable thing. How amazing that we have cherries—gastronomical hedonism!” In his book you will find an iconic photo of each aroma. He didn’t want to lose the magic as his idea for a book percolated. When he met photographer Leigh Beisch, who had shot a cookbook authored by Joyce Goldstein, he knew a book was possible: the essences of wine in photographs accompanied by a list of wines sharing those tastes and smells. Alder wrote a proposal, submitted it around, to a resounding “No”. Twenty years ago that would have ended the project he says, but not today. He decided to do it himself and initiated a Kickstarter campaign. [In July *The Essence of Wine* was shortlisted for the Louis Roederer Wine Writers’ Award for 2015 as Wine Book of the Year. Weeks ago in London it received the rare distinction of the Roederer’s Chairman’s Prize (from Charles Metcalf).] ■

Q & A’s

Alder read a few flavor and aroma entries aloud and then asked for questions.

Q: Will the wine lists go stale?

A: No; no vintages were given. I chose wines that year in and year out have a signature consistency.

Taste and smell are the same, the “aroma.” This book is about that essential magic, celebrating the delights of the palate.

Q: What about wine glasses? Riedel, with its four types of glasses?

A: Smell is affected by shape but taste is not. In your nasal cavity is how you taste the wine.

Q: What about how thin the glass is?

A: Purely a matter of sensibility. As long as the mouth is smaller than the bowl, it doesn’t matter about thickness. It is about tasting the wine, learning about it on the table at dinner. Wine is as deep as you want to go. It is a matter of training yourself to taste the deeper levels—flavor profiles: naturally occurring versus additives. 60% of the wine that is sold is under \$6.00 a bottle and is “manufactured”—stabilized, color-adjusted, and so forth. Like canned soup. There is a certain inauthenticity in those flavors for someone who cares about wines. Certain yeasts generate certain compounds, producing a spectrum of authenticity. Paul Draper [of Ridge Vineyards] is all about artisanal: an aesthetic end product, a cultural product—like organic produce and small bookstores.

The Essence of Wine is available online at www.vinography.com/essence_of_wine.html

25TH Wine Seminar

“Winemaking in Two Worlds: Napa Valley and France—Burgundy and Bordeaux”

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2015, ECO-LAB THEATRE, CIA-GREYSTONE AND RAYMOND VINEYARDS, SAINT HELENA



Moderator: Gilles de Chambure, MS

Panelists: Jean-Charles Boisset, Aaron Pott, Dawnine Dyer, Michael Silacci

We are indebted to Advisory Board member and former NVWLA president Bob Long for his initial seminar concept of comparing contemporary wines of Napa Valley with those of France. Although Bob envisioned a day devoted exclusively to Cabernet Sauvignon, we like to think, had he been able to attend, that he would have been satisfied with how the wine seminar turned out.

NVWLA president Carolyn Martini began by thanking those who funded a dozen scholarships for graduate students to attend from the UC Davis Department of Viticulture and Enology. She then thanked our panelists for taking part and sharing their wines, moderator Gilles de Chambure for his time putting together the seminar and now moderating it, and Jane Skeels and your editor for coordinating the event.

Gilles de Chambure

Gilles reached Napa Valley from France via New York in 1993 when Bob Mondavi hired him as the senior wine educator at Robert Mondavi Winery. Gilles became a Master Sommelier in 2000 and began teaching classes a dozen years ago for the Court of Master Sommeliers as well as for Bill Harlan at Meadowood. He has since formed his own company, MS Wine Consulting, and is now the president and general manager for a new venture in Napa Valley, Alejandro Bulgheroni Estate.

Gilles introduced the seminar by saying it would give us a chance to discover the influences, the cross-pollinations and experiences our panelists have had working both in California and France, illustrating some of the practices that they have brought to and taken from each country. We would touch on four regions in France: Champagne, Burgundy and Bordeaux—both its banks: right (Saint-Émilien) and left (Médoc), because Opus One is a Napa Valley and Médoc joint venture.

First, Gilles gave a quick overview of the influence of France on California: among individuals, the first European plantings were brought to California in the 1830's by fittingly named Jean-Louis Vignes from Bordeaux. Another Bordelais, Charles Carpy, came to Napa Valley in the

1870's. In the 1890's this entrepreneur acquired Greystone. Burgundian Paul Masson was involved with phylloxera research. Among local wineries were the Franco-Swiss Winery of 1876, Brun & Chaix in 1877, and Beaulieu in 1900 begun by Bordelais Georges de Latour who came to the United States in 1882 and with Beaulieu became a bridge between California and France. Our panelist Michael Silacci actually worked with Georges de Latour's celebrated winemaker, André Tchelistcheff, who had studied at the Pasteur Institute in Paris.

Now, our modern era is the result of an increasing number of land restrictions in France spurring investment in the New World. Clos du Val was founded by John Goelet with Bernard Portet in 1972 [the same year as Warren Winiarski's Stag's Leap Wine Cellars] and in 1973, Domaine Chandon by Moët et Chandon; in 1976, California wines won the Paris Tasting and French investment in California followed. In 1979, the first joint effort between France and California was begun with Opus One between Bob Mondavi and the Baron Philippe de Rothschild; Christian Moueix's Dominus was founded in 1982, Mumm Napa in 1986, St. Supéry in 1987, and Claude Taittinger's Domaine Carneros in 1988. More recently, in 2013 Araujo Estate was sold to the owners of Château LaTour.

In addition to wineries, there is a very long list of consulting winemakers, Michel Rolland from the Pomerol and Stéphane Derenoncourt of St-Émilion, to name two. There have also been ampelographers, soil scientists like Philippe Melka, viticulturists as well enologists like the Morlet brothers, and the new winemaker for Inglenook, Philippe Bascaules from Château Margaux. Former NVWLA Board of Directors member Chris Howell of Cain Vineyards was educated in Bordeaux; winemaker Daniel Baron at Silver Oak came from working at Château Pétrus. All provide opportunity for cross-pollination.

Dawnine Dyer

Gilles introduced Dawnine by telling us that she had come to Napa Valley in 1974 from UC Davis and went to work at Robert Mondavi Winery with Zelma Long. She then joined Domaine Chandon (Chandon), which had bought 350 acres in Yountville when an acre of such land cost \$1,100. Chandon's first wines were made at Trefethen. Dawnine became Chandon's head winemaker in 1978 and remained so for 25 years. Épernay was her model for quality control. In 1996, Dawnine planted her own vineyard with her husband, Bill, on Diamond Mountain. She retired from Chandon in 2000 to devote time to Dyer Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon. In 2005 she began a partnership with Meteor Vineyard. The wines she poured were:

Domaine Chandon; Tom Tiburzi, winemaker
NV Blanc de Noirs, California
Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier
96,000 cases; 12.5% alcohol

2004 *étoile Tête de Cuvée*, California
62% Sonoma County, 38% Napa County
61% Chardonnay, 34% Pinot Noir,
5% Pinot Meunier
1,035 cases; 13% alcohol

2013 Pinot Meunier, Carneros
100% Pinot Meunier
3,800 cases; 14% alcohol

Dawnine began by saying it was a great honor to part of a seminar put on by such a great organization! In fact, NVWLA began about the time Moët et Chandon started to have a conversation on a wine venture in California. It had had success in South America with a winery in Argentina. Now it decided to export its expertise.

Dawnine called this a critical part of the evolution of California market expansion. The results are subtle, and sometimes come back to bite us, but at the time, the doors were completely open in the sparkling wine world with a willingness to exchange information that was unprecedented.

The brand-new Chandon was launched in 1976 before a Moët Champagne market was well established in the West. New York was Moët et Chandon's biggest market when still wine was

receiving the most effort in promotion. Parent company Moët Hennessey was still family-held, though, so it was more flexible in making decisions. The company learned to come to California like explorers and support local staff development.

For 20 of the 25 years Dawnine was at Chandon, Mordier was its Chef de Cave. A WW II veteran, she said Mordier was well aware of the world as a bigger place than Champagne. He was always curious—about grape varieties, techniques in farming, methods of harvesting. And there are lots of ways one can explore these without the limitations of France’s restrictive appellation system.

One of the hallmarks of process has been the addition of Pinot Meunier to Pinot Noir, with its Eye of the Partridge (Œil de Perdrix) quality in the Blanc de Noirs. This wine picked up a little color being made in California. Initially, Chandon was limited to the grape varieties already in California. The American regulation of importation was very restrictive and the alternative of “suitcased” (brought in about one’s person or in one’s brief- or suitcase) budwood wasn’t practical for planting the 600 acres Chandon had bought for \$400 an acre in Los Carneros. Today there is a wider range in style at Chandon. It is Dawnine’s observation that grapes in warmer growing areas have a little pinker fruit, adding a bit of color to the Blanc de Noirs. Dawnine finds the Blanc de Noirs a bit fruit forward. There is a higher sugar level in the

fruit from Carneros, not so much in Mendocino or Anderson Valley. When is the fruit ripe? As soon as there are no green, bitter, hard tastes.

Chandon’s grapes were first picked by hand and pressed right in the vineyard. It used small picking bins—1/2-ton in size when big 5-ton gondolas were the norm in 1972. And then came machine night picking. Chandon was probably the first in California to pick so, to avoid polyphenols in the wine, maintaining cool fruit temperatures in order to keep the characteristics of the variety. These picking machines were made in France and took the fruit direct to press.

Louis M. Martini was one of the first wineries to plant vineyard in Los Carneros, followed by Rene di Rosa. The soils are very different from those in France as well as the climate. The soils are shallow, and there is clay rather than the chalk of France. The temperatures are cool to cold from the cold ocean nearby making for bright, bold fruit flavors even at lower sugars. Martini planted Pinot Blanc, a Cognac variety that is thick-skinned. Bitterness in the wine was a problem, initially, solved by blending to keep neutrality.

The Tête de Cuvée is made from Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier – a more traditional blend. Pinot Meunier is a naturally occurring mutation in Champagne. It is what is called a “sport,” and is known as the short-growing cousin, often planted in the worst areas in Champagne. It has a very red stone-fruit flavor, also of leather. It is like a compact Pinot Noir,

a little more dialed back, and important to the Tête de Cuvée development.

The Blanc de Noirs is made from multiple vintages. The Tête is yeastier; it spends seven years on the lees—important for its complexity. About 15% to 20% is reserved from each vintage for the Tête. Its blending combines multiple elements, marrying or maintaining different lots for accents. The regions where the fruit was grown, the ages of the lots, and the house style affect the blend, as the winemaker seeks excellence and consistency overall.

Dawnine avers that it all starts in the vineyard; the wine’s complexity begins from there—in different regions, in different soils, with different levels of complexity. What was the virtue in Chandon’s exporting experts? It wished to apply the very best of techniques from its 200-year history in France. And the sparkling wine community was supportive of the ideals of winemaking rather than competitive. It was a unique circumstance. The experts had to meet such challenges as a maritime climate in California. The greatest challenge overall being, as Dawnine phrased it: “How do we find our own voice?”

Gilles next summarized a few of the influences of Burgundy on California as an introduction to Jean-Charles Boisset. First, Gilles noted the improvement in Pinot Noir after Chardonnay, which came with a new focus in quality in California. He next cited certain wine merchants in the United States: Frank Schoonmaker, Alexis Lichine, and Kermit Lynch, and their

bringing in the influence of imported wine and the encouragement of unique bottlings; Becky Wasserman in Burgundy choosing the best of its wines to export; Maison Louis Jadot owned by the Kopf family of Kobrand; Ann Colgin, of Colgin Cellars and a consultant to Sotheby's Wine Department now with an interest in Maison Camille Giroud in Burgundy; HdV—the venture between the de Villaine family of Burgundy and the Hyde Family of Napa; and, of course, Hospice de Beaune inspiring Auction Napa Valley.

Jean-Charles Boisset

Jean-Charles began by thanking the panel and saying it was a pleasure and honor to be introduced by Gilles. He thanked him for all his work over the years bringing two worlds together which has meant his bringing more people to Napa Valley. The wines Jean-Charles poured were:

Maison Jean-Claude Boisset, Grégory Patriat, winemaker

2011 Chambolle-Musigny Les Chardannes,
Côte de Nuits, Bourgogne, France

100% Pinot Noir

13.5% alcohol

DeLoach Vineyards, Brian Mahoney, winemaker

2012 Estate Pinot Noir Olivet Bench, Russian
River Valley

100% Pinot Noir

500 cases, 14.5% alcohol



25th Wine Seminar Faculty L to R: Aaron Pott, Dawnine Dyer, Gilles de Chambure, Michael Silacci and Jean-Charles Boisset

JCB, Brian Mahoney and Grégory Patriat,
winemakers; Jean-Charles Boisset, consulting
2011 3, Russian River Valley and Côte de
Nuits, Bourgogne, France

60% Pinot Noir from three vineyards in the
Sebastopol Hills

40% Pinot Noir from three vineyards in
Côte de Nuits

269 cases; 13% alcohol

Jean-Charles' father, Jean-Claude, began the Boissets' company in the 1960's with his Maison Vougeot. Jean-Charles says with aplomb that he was born in a winery and had set his career compass needle to winemaking when, at age 11,

he came to the wine country of California with his father and grandfather. When they visited Sonoma's Buena Vista Winery, Jean-Charles thought to himself, "I'll be back," he liked the feel of it so.

He and his sister Nathalie began to experiment in wine production as they took over their father's business. They sought to break out of tradition, acquiring property in the 1990's in Canada with a portfolio that included ice wine. Next, they added California's Lyeth Estate, De Loach Vineyards and Raymond Vineyards to their holdings.

Jean-Charles also wished to thank his membership in La Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin; he considers its membership his brothers and sisters, and their love of wine and of life most important to him. The organization began in the 1930's and is now centered in his hometown of Vougeot.

Next, Jean-Charles had everyone warm up à la Bourgogne by singing and clapping twice through: Lalala-lalala-la-la.

And then Jean-Charles returned us to his boyhood visit to Buena Vista. His grandparents were both schoolteachers, anxious for Jean-Charles to discover the United States—there were just 176 people in their hometown of Vougeot. And so the Boissets came to see the missions of Old California—from Monterey to Sonoma, and Jean-Charles fell in love with the energy, dynamism, sense of place, and possibility here as he thought of Thomas Jefferson's joining one ocean to another.

In 2011, the Boisset acquisition of Buena Vista, the oldest winery in California, was a dream come true for Jean-Charles. Charles Krug had been at Buena Vista 150 years earlier, working for Baron Agusthon Haraszthy, who gave him a wine press and vine cuttings. Jean-Charles called the Baron a father of modern viticulture. This has been the inspiration for the just-opened Historical Wine Tool Museum at Buena Vista.

The seminar, Jean-Charles said, isn't just the French influencing California, but California bringing its practices to France. Just think of Warren Winiarski and the Paris Tasting: the importance of our senses rather than purely the label. There are 22 other wineries in the Boisset Collection and 27 winemakers on the Boisset family team, which makes for a lot of cross-energy. Today, there are 50,000 acres of vineyard in Burgundy and 4,000 acres planted in Napa Valley.

There are 745 kinds of wines in Burgundy, according to Jean-Charles. Of Burgundy's 32 Grand Cru appellations, 24 are in the Côte de Nuits, which is about 11 miles long, and Chambolle has nine of its vineyard designates. The region is known for its stratification, the geology: its soft rocks, concave from the passage of water (one of Jean-Charles' favorite characteristics). In the 11th century, [Cistercian] monks brought Pinot Noir to the area. Vougeot is nested among Échezeaux, Chambertin, Chambolle-Musigny, and its wine is very feminine—Jean-Charles' mother's favorite. Jean-Charles called Le Musigny the second most valuable. It is 11 hectares and adjacent to Chambolle-Musigny.

Jean-Charles believes earth defines the wine: soil first, then the plant, climate, passion, and people. The Chambolle-Musigny Les Chardannes vineyard belongs to childhood friends. Its 45 and 95 year-old vines grow in calcareous soil and their roots go deep, 6 to 7 meters deep (20 feet). The wine is aromatic with finesse on the palate.

The fruit is picked into little 15-kilo cases; from the sorting tables whole clusters are de-stemmed and fermented in oval, open top, cold fermenters. Maceration is long—28 to 30 days. Jean-Charles thinks the warmth from fermentation is an energy from the monks. "We guide the expression," he says. The wine is moved by gravity flow; there is no filtration; fining is with one and a half egg whites per barrel, and bottled without any intervention. It is aged in 15% to 25% new oak for a true expression of *terroir*. The stave wood is chosen within the forest, and staves air-dried. Only four barrels of the 2011 Les Chardannes were made. Jean-Charles calls the wine "very delicate."

DeLoach was acquired in 2003 from the Canadian venture, VinCor. VinCor had assembled its rootstocks and clones of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. When Boisset Family Estates decided to come to California, it was faced with Napa or Sonoma? Its intent was to have a little Pinot Noir. DeLoach is next to Kistler, Merry Edwards, the Pellegrini Wine Company; it is on the Rodeo Drive of Pinot! There are 400 acres under contract. The previous vineyard was pulled in 2004 and replanted biodynamically. The vineyard is certified organic, as is Raymond. Jean-Charles is always very proud to present the DeLoach Pinot Noir. He says in blind tastings it is always in the top five. The wine is from fruit grown on three rootstocks from eight different clones.

Next came the inspiration to compare, contrast and blend the French with the California wine. The winemaker is the same for the DeLoach as the JCB. The winemaking methods are identical. Jean-Charles likens its richness to la “Big Mac”—with its layers of whole cluster, destemmed, in the vat, and some remontage (pumping over). He says there are lots of natural tannins. The wine is aged in a minimum of new oak—35%-40%. Jean-Charles and his winemaker want the *terroir* to express itself. Think of Burgundy’s 32 Grand Cru designates, versus Russian River Valley Pinot; the difference of 1,000 years to 150; map signs of Burgundy to those of the Russian River and its 8 vineyards of Chardonnay and 9 of Zinfandel. He characterized the Pinot fruit of the Russian River as not too ripe, with fantastic spices.

For the JCB No. 3 blend, Jean-Charles wanted the best of both; both would be fruity. Should he choose Cote de Nuits or Cote de Beaune? Totally crazy! And from California—the Russian River—then mix. When you taste a young Pinot from Russian River what you love is the flamboyance of the aromatics. While Pinot Noir is France—austerity, long-lasting *terroir*. Initially, Boisset blended Beaune and Russian River. That blend was good but not great. Next came a new winemaker and a new trial with 2009. That blend was from Nuits St. George—powerful and Gevrey Chambertin—feminine, and three vineyards from Russian River. The French fruit was air freighted in and blended at DeLoach. The 2010 JCB No. 3 was a great success. The 2011 was an illumination moment: another vineyard

must be added!. To add length, Chambolle-Musigny was included. Three magical favorite parallel lines: 3 key vineyards from France and California, and three key descriptors of the blend: Graceful, Honoris, Maritus for the marriage of California and French Pinot Noir fruit, Jean-Charles’ marriage to Gina, and their young twin daughters, Honoré and Grace.

Jean-Charles says the limit of the blend is endless. California can participate to a great world blend and improve it.

Gilles said we would now focus on Bordeaux and Napa Valley, with its legacies of Crabb, ToKalon, Beaulieu, Larkmead, and Beringer; that Bordeaux has a spiritual home here in Napa Valley. The next two panelists make wine from divers sources. We know Bordeaux keenly felt a British influence when Eleanor, Duchess of Aquitaine, took an English king for her husband and Gilles noted that Aaron Pott has an English wife.

Gilles next mentioned Thomas Jefferson’s requesting Claret made from a first classification of Bordeaux; this was a wine made just for him rather than a négociant. Our third president also imported the first documented wines from a first growth classified vineyard in the United States—Château Haut-Brion (owned by an American family, the Dillons, since 1935). Gilles also called attention to the significant numbers of American media reporting on wine, wine critics, and the promotion of wine.

Aaron Pott

Aaron introduced himself as an “extreme user” of the Napa Valley Wine Library, calling it “an important resource for us all.” The wines Aaron poured were:

Pott Wine; Aaron Pott, winemaker
number of cases made of each: about
75 cases annually
alcohol 14.8% for all wines

2010 *La Carte et Le Territoire* Young Inglewood Vineyard, Saint Helena
proprietary red blend of Merlot 70% and Cabernet Franc 30%

2011 *La Carte et Le Territoire* Young Inglewood Vineyard, Saint Helena
proprietary red blend of Merlot 70% and Cabernet Franc 30%

2012 *La Carte et Le Territoire* Young Inglewood Vineyard, Saint Helena
proprietary red blend of Merlot 70% and Cabernet Franc 30%

Aaron grew up in Eugene, Oregon. When he was ten years old, he was taken to Paris by what he called his over-exuberant family and at dinner Aaron learned from the waiter, “Meelk is for babies.” He was brought wine and he thought, ‘So, this is what is going to make one adult.’ He and his family later moved to Davis, California where Aaron went to college, graduating from UC Davis with a degree in Enology.



L to R: Winemakers Michael Silacci, Dawnine Dyer and Aaron Pott at the break

After a stint at Robert Mondavi Winery, Aaron worked with John Kongsgaard at Newton Vineyards (and is sure the Mahler blasting out from his vehicle's stereo had clinched his interview with John) and also with Newton's consulting winemaker, Michel Rolland. In the course of working at Newton, Aaron asked Michel for suggestions of where to work in France and in 1993 found himself on the Right Bank at Château Troplong Mondot and a year later at his second premier cru château of Saint-Émilion, Château La Tour Figeac.

Aaron experienced wines of great quality in different vintages there because of different ripenings and poorer, even catastrophic wines in hot vintages. He characterized harvest in France as short: ten days! At La Tour Figeac: merely four days. Aaron says that in Saint-Émilion when Château Cheval Blanc gets out and begins to polish its tractors, everyone starts harvesting. In the winter, if one digs a hole in Cheval Blanc, at one meter the hole fills up with water, the water table is so high, and active. The water all goes away in the summer. In Napa we can water vines, while in France, one can only hope and pray.

Wanting to learn more about vineyards, Aaron also enrolled at the University of Burgundy for a degree in viticulture. He chose Burgundy because he thought Pinot Noir, being such a little b*s*a*d of a grapevine, was much better to learn on than Cabernet Sauvignon. Aaron says while the differences in *terroir* in France are complex, they are nothing like Napa Valley with its 33 distinct soil types, the nearness of the ocean and the narrowness of our Valley. Napa *terroir* is very complex.

For Aaron, Terroir shows especially in Cabernet Franc. Cabernet Franc is not a recent variety; it has rarely changed in over 1,000 years (although in 1700 it crossed with Sauvignon Blanc to beget Cabernet Sauvignon). It is from the 13th century and Aaron finds that its close relationship to its wild origins shows more *terroir*. He says the variety is difficult to site in Napa Valley; it needs volcanic ash soils that are well drained. In such soils, its vines produce small berries that hold its aromatic characteristics. Aaron particularly likes intense orange volcanic soils and alluvial bench lands for this variety. He also says a cool climate—weather is key.

In 1998, Aaron was ready to return to Napa Valley where now, in addition to being a consulting winemaker for a number of wineries, Aaron and his wife, Claire, have vineyard on Mount Veeder. Their Pott Wine also makes wine from several other vineyards including its *La Carte et Le Territoire* from two rows of Merlot and one of Cabernet Franc growing in the Young Vineyard at the end of Inglewood Lane, Saint Helena. The soil here is rocky; it is an alluvial fan vineyard.

Aaron calls Merlot a very humid-loving grape and observes that we live in a very, very dry climate—France is much more hot and humid than California. Aaron feels that lower humidity diminishes Merlot characteristics but cooler weather benefits them. He doesn't mind floral characters, especially in Cabernet Franc, with its notes of violet, cedar, blueberry. He admits to not being a big leaf-puller (to manage canopy) and judges ripeness by the taste of the berries in the field. Napa Valley rain and fog give a softness to the varieties, and his experiences in France and here enable Aaron to advise on widely different vintages. The Merlot is picked two weeks ahead of the Cabernet Franc. The 2010 vintage reminds him of France; 2011 was equal to his worst Bordeaux experiences; the 2012 is an ideal vintage for this area, especially for Cabernet Franc with its cooler vintage—there was absolutely no raisining. Aaron says Merlot and Cabernet Franc are his two most favorite varieties: “my loves, easy-going Bordeaux varieties that practically grow themselves.” In 2012, Food and Wine Magazine named Aaron its “Winemaker of the Year.

Gilles then commented on Saint-Émilion and Pomerol *garagistes* who we may have thought of as making do, but were full of experimentation: plastic tarps between rows to prevent dilution by rain of the grapes' juice—wines from which were later excluded from the AOC system. (Our own “*garagistes*” even used leaf blowers as well as helicopters to dry the grapes after late rains.)

A hallmark of innovation came with Opus One in 1979: the first official joint venture between Napa and France. Gilles says it brought much in the way of innovation to the Valley: changes in vine density, over-the-row tractors. The venture, between Mouton Rothschild and Robert Mondavi Winery (RMW) was a true blend of winegrowing and winemaking techniques. The first Chef de Caves, the third generation in his family, for instance, worked half the time in France, half the time in Oakville. Gilles then introduced Michael Silacci.

Michael Silacci

Michael says proudly that he grew up in Gilroy—a real farming community. His grandparents were from Switzerland and he has worked harvest in the Loire Valley—meaning Michael's international approach to understanding the world began at an early age. He took an undergraduate degree in enology from UC Davis and the University of Bordeaux and a graduate degree in viticulture from UC Davis. After a Bordelais apprenticeship, Michael was at Beaulieu Vineyards for six years, three with André Tchelistcheff, its then consulting winemaker. Michael spent the next year as winemaker at the King Estate in Oregon and then six years as winemaker at Stag's Leap Wine Cellars. In 2001, Michael joined Opus One (OO) as a team leader—its director of viticulture and enology. The wines Michael poured were:

Opus One; Michael Silacci, winemaker

2005 Opus One, Napa Valley
proprietary red blend of
Cabernet Sauvignon 88%, Merlot 5%,
Petit Verdot 3%, Cabernet Franc 3%,
Malbec 1%
22,500 cases; 14% alcohol

2007 Opus One, Napa Valley
proprietary red blend of
Cabernet Sauvignon 79%, Merlot 8%,
Petit Verdot 6%, Cabernet Franc 6%,
Malbec 1%
17,500 cases; 14.7% alcohol

2011 Opus One, Napa Valley
proprietary red blend of
Cabernet Sauvignon 71%, Merlot 11%,
Petit Verdot 9%, Cabernet Franc 8%,
Malbec 1%
23,300 cases; 14% alcohol

Part of *terroir* is also people, affirms Michael. He recalled Gilles, as head of wine education for Meadowood Resort, bringing people to OO. On one occasion he told Michael, ‘My guests are in their 80s; could we have a brief tour? One is a museum director.’ The brief tour included an assistant's office where artwork for a label for olive oil was hanging, submitted by the children of OO employees. Michael said the guests all felt like they were with Ponce de Leon at the Fountain of Youth!

At OO Michael says they make wine so it gives a sense of time (with its season, flavor, aroma) and place (by its structure). This had come home to him in spending time in the vineyards of Stags Leap, of Fay.

The joint venture of Opus One came about from Baron Philippe de Rothschild's interest in making a new wine that was most expressive of place. He had visited California and met Robert Mondavi in Santa Barbara. In 1970 they met again in Maui. The Baron thought they would be ideal partners and in 1978 invited Robert to Pauillac. The American entrepreneur had worried he had been forgotten, but not at all. The two spent time tasting and visiting at the château (bought by the family in 1853), for the Baron needed to know if the two could get along. After dinner the Baron asked that Robert to come to his office—which was his bedroom, and he was in bed!

Robert and the Baron agreed to grow the classic Bordeaux red varieties to reflect Pauillac and Oakville and a wine that would bring what was unique and different from the two partners. The wine was to be made by Mouton Rothschild's winemaker Lucien Sionneau and that of RMW, Robert's son Tim Mondavi. Their first vintage was the 1979. In 1984 Lucien Sionneau retired and Patrick Léon took Lucien's place. After the death of the Baron in 1988, his daughter, Baroness Philippine de Rothschild

took over the family's wine interests. Under her leadership the Opus One winery was opened in 1991. In 2001, Michael was invited to join OO as its director of viticulture and viniculture. He says he decided "yes" beneath his hat, smoking a cigar, floating down a river in an inner tube. In 2004, he was made winemaker at OO—singly responsible for all its vines and wines

When Michael joined Opus One, he very much joined everyone as part of a team. He says he was the dove between viticulture and viniculture both here and in France, as there was tension between the two estates' practices. But he says there was and is a lot of cross-pollination—between Pauillac and Napa, and among OO and RMW. Opus used five-year aged staves one year and the next, all of Robert Mondavi Winery followed suit. The "T-5" barrel from Tarransaud was a similar innovation. And Michael and his vineyard workers spent so much time discussing and identifying powdered mildew, they were able to write a handbook. Each worker continues to be rewarded for finding evidence of mildew or botrytis in the vineyard—here and in France.

When RMW was sold to Constellation Brands, Inc., the Baroness did not exercise her right of first refusal and in 2005, Baron Philippe de Rothschild SA reached an accord with Constellation Brands, Inc. Each would own 50% of OO. Michael called the accord and its resultant reorganization a catalyst for independence. Public relations, marketing—many aspects were improved. It has been a rewarding

partnership. Certain traditions are unchanged, however: Tuesday is still doughnut day, à la RMW.

Opus One is dedicated to the concept of wine giving one a sense of time and place. There are four estate vineyards, two at OO. "North," the Q block of ToKalon came from RMW in 1981 (densely replanted in 1995), "River" in 1983, "Ballestra" in 1984, and "South," the ToKalon K Block in 2008. Michael asked a soils scientist from Cheval Blanc to test the soils and he turned the vineyards into Swiss cheese as he mapped vineyard soil types.

Irrigation is a very big deal in Napa. In 2002 Michael's team asked themselves: how can we approach the rainfall of Bordeaux in Napa Valley? And, what is an expression of place? Michael's work with Warren at Stag's Leap Wine Cellars taught him the responsibility of adding back. OO extended the time between irrigations, but with more water at each time. Michael says the vine roots went deeper and OO used 40% less water! The team does add water just before bud break, and compost. The vineyards are farmed organically, ToKalon "South" biodynamically. Extensive clonal trials have also been held to find the optimum vines for Opus One as well as careful yeast culturing with a French microbiologist to find the best strains on the fruit for native yeast fermentation.



Luncheon at Raymond Above: Table-bopping Executive Chef Michel Cornu on the right. Right: Jean-Charles Boisset leading us all in a pre-prandial, Burgundian tra-la-la-la

Michael is very aware of seasonal change and what he calls “vineyard-centricity.” Each of the blocks has its own character and, for Michael, regality. He laughingly recalled a harvest at Stag’s Leap Wine Cellar when all the tanks to hold small lots of wine were full and some must had to be fermented in a cubic tank. Warren was worried; Michael thought, ‘Why? The queen is still the queen even when she’s riding in a clunker.’

The best you can put in the vineyard, counsels Michael, is your own two feet. You need to spend a lot of time in the vineyard, a steady amount each day. At

veraison, you move through the fresh fruit stage to a neutrality and then finally ripe fruit. Blending, which he looks forward to, is done in February and March. It brings layering, complexity, harmony to the finished wine.

Michael characterizes the **2005** as a most classic vintage; the **2007** as very California: a warm growing season with lower yields at harvest. OO let remaining berries ripen; the **2007** has a freshness akin to the stems of roses and their petals; the **2011** came from a cooler, wetter vintage—similar to a French Bordelais harvest. ■

Scholarships to the Wine Seminar for UC Davis graduate students in its Viticulture and Enology Department were generously provided by:

David B. Gaw
Carolyn Martini

Elizabeth Martini
Jack Oliver

Jean Phillips
Wight Vineyard Management

Q & A’s

There was time for only one question from the audience:

Warren Winiarski asked, ‘As psychologists, thinking of an end, registered in the owl of the folks who drink your wine, is there a different image of this soul for the blend, for the ones who buy and taste this wine?’

Michael: Yes

Aaron: I’m about terroir, not souls

Dawnine: I think of style versus single vineyard, the soul of the place, centuries of experience.

Jean-Charles: First is to play at the generic level and then further refinements. Since 52% of our wine is sold out of the United States we are talking about a global soul.

In conclusion, Gilles reminded us that wine is one of the few products that connect you to a time and place. Making it requires energy, and cannot be standardized. We all must step back and learn to appreciate wine’s diversity.

We all then repaired to Raymond Vineyards for a splendid al fresco lunch beneath the plane trees of The Grove. Jean-Charles gave us a very warm welcome and led us in another go at “Tra-la-la.” Executive chef Michel Cornu then introduced each course and spent time at each table discussing his superlative dishes. The gardens and hencoop of Raymond Vineyards provided most of the produce; the cheeses concluding our lunch, however, were Burgundian.



53RD Annual Tasting
“Toasting the Twelves”
SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2015
SILVERADO RESORT & SPA, NAPA

Sunday, August 9, brought a breezy, sunny afternoon—perfect Annual Tasting weather. It had been a worry as Napa Valley had several bouts of hot days this summer. And thanks to the oaks in the Grove filling in after their last pruning, there was plenty of shade—amplified by a large number of continuously strategically placed umbrellas.

This year’s tasting was a celebration of the 2012 harvest that winemakers had found to be much easier to deal with after their preceding vintages of 2009, 2010 and 2011. Our board had decided on the emphasis before the 2013’s had come on the scene. We do not know if we will emphasize a certain vintage again, but we are very appreciative of the participation by our wineries that embraced this year’s theme. Most of the 133 wines poured were from lots of

1,000 cases or less; half of these were from lots of 500 or less, and nine were from less than 100 cases. 86 wines were single red varieties, 15 were proprietary red blends. [The Edge Hills Estate “Mixed Blacks” was from its own field blend of Alicante Bouschet, Carignane, Grenache, and Mourvèdre planted 15 years ago, Paul Draper advising and Tablas Creek providing budwood.] Of the 86 single red varieties, 46 were Cabernet Sauvignon, 6 Merlot, 4 Cabernet Franc, and 1 Petit Verdot. There were also 8 Pinot Noir, 4 Zinfandel, and 2 Syrah. 27 of the wines were single white varieties and one was a proprietary white blend. There were two sparkling wines and two rosés. Of the single white varieties, 12 were Sauvignon Blanc and 10 Chardonnay. One Chenin Blanc, one Dolcetto, one Pinot Blanc, and two Viognier rounded out the whites.

To accompany the wines, V. Sattui Marketplace & Deli with Silverado kept two stations busy serving the membership variety of cheeses garnished with fresh fruit. The Model Bakery had donated dozens of its freshly baked sliced French baguettes to pair with the cheese.

Our membership seems to prefer a vintner’s choice tasting (we welcome your comments about the Annual Tasting at any time: editor@napawinelibrary.com) to that of a single variety, because of the many more kinds of wines poured, and the natural progression in tasting from white through rosé to red. Our wineries appreciate the purposefulness with which the NVWLA membership tastes: its knowledge and attention. To everyone who took part in “Toasting the Twelves,” thank you, indeed. ■



*Above: Drew Dickson of Andrew Lane Winery
Below Left: At Stony Hill Vineyard’s table with winemaker Mike Chellini and his wife
Below Right: Members enjoying a small group discussion*



THE WINERIES AND THEIR WINES AT THE 53RD ANNUAL TASTING WERE:

Amizetta Winery; William Clark, winemaker

2012 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon – 750 cases

2012 Napa Valley “Complexity” – 750 cases

Andrew Lane Wines; Andrew Dickson, winemaker

2012 Rutherford Cabernet Sauvignon – 389 cases

Anomaly Vineyards; Mark Porembski, winemaker

2012 Saint Helena Cabernet Sauvignon – 1,193 cases

Arms Winery; Sandi Belcher, winemaker

2012 Melanson Vineyard, Pritchard Hill, Napa Valley Syrah – 100 cases

2012 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon – 300 cases

Baldacci Family Vineyards;

Rolando Herrera, winemaker

2012 Honey B Vineyard, Los Carneros Chardonnay
1,000 cases

2012 Honey B Vineyard, Los Carneros Pinot Noir
1,000 cases

Ballentine Vineyards; Bruce Devlin, winemaker

2012 Fig Tree Vineyard, Napa Valley Reserve
Chardonnay - 105 cases

2012 Pocaí Vineyard, Napa Valley Reserve
Cabernet Sauvignon - 105 cases

Beau Vigne Estate Winery; Kirk Venge, winemaker

2012 Romeo Stags Ridge, Atlas Peak
Cabernet Sauvignon – 344 cases

2012 Cult Stags Ridge, Atlas Peak

Cabernet Sauvignon – 632 cases

Blackbird Vineyard; Aaron Pott, winemaker

2012 Napa Valley Arriviste Rosé – 2,100 cases

2014 Napa Valley “Arise” – 215 barrels

Cain Vineyard and Winery; Chris Howell, winemaker

Napa Valley “NVII Cain Cuvée” – 10,692 cases

Cakebread Cellars; Julianne Laks, winemaker

2012 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon – 5,000 cases

Casa Nuestra;

Eugene Kirkham and Darren Chertkoff, winemakers

2012 Saint Helena Estate Cabernet Franc – 50 cases

Darren Chertkoff, winemaker

1997 Saint Helena Estate Cabernet Franc

212 cases

Eugene Kirkham, winemaker

Ceja Vineyards; Amando Ceja, winemaker

2013 Los Carneros Chardonnay – 500 cases

2011 Los Carneros Pinot Noir – 1,000 cases

Chase Cellars;

Joel Aiken and Russell Bevan, winemakers

Bourn 2012 Hayne Vineyard, Saint Helena

Zinfandel – 188 cases

Chase 2012 Hayne Vineyard, Saint Helena Zinfandel
485 cases

Clos du Val; Kristy Melton, winemaker

2012 Stags Leap District Cabernet Sauvignon

2,500 cases

2012 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

32,000 cases

Crocker & Starr; Pam Starr, winemaker

2012 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon Blanc

625 cases

Edge Hill Estate; Anthony Weytjens, winemaker

2012 Saint Helena Estate Mixed Blacks – 211 cases

Faust; Charles Thomas, winemaker

2012 Coombsville Cabernet Sauvignon

30,000 cases

Fontanella Family Winery; Jeff Fontanella, winemaker

2013 Mount Veeder Chardonnay – 700 cases

2012 Mount Veeder Cabernet Sauvignon

900 cases



The refinements of tasting J. Davies Vineyard Cabernet

The Good Life Wine Collective;

Rob Lloyd, winemaker

Handwritten 2010 Napa Valley “Three Words”

250 cases

Humanitas 2014 Gordon Valley Vineyard, Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc – 400 cases

Jessup Cellars 2012 Truchard Vineyard, Los Carneros Pinot Noir – 600 cases

Green & Red Vineyard; Jay Heminway, winemaker

2012 Catacula Vineyard, Chiles Valley District Sauvignon Blanc – 450 cases

2012 Chiles Canyon, Chiles Valley District Zinfandel – 2,600 cases

2012 Tip Top Vineyard, Chiles Valley District Zinfandel – 700 cases

Grgich Hills Estate; Mike Grgich, winemaker

2012 Napa Valley Estate Chardonnay
30,832 cases

2012 Napa Valley Estate Cabernet Sauvignon
16,264 cases

Groth Vineyards & Winery; Michael Weis, winemaker

2014 Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc – 39,000 cases

2012 Oakville Cabernet Sauvignon – 30,000 cases

Hagafen Cellars; Ernie Weir, winemaker

2012 Napa Valley Sparkling Brut Rosé – 400 cases

2010 Hanna Vineyard, Oak Knoll Merlot
200 cases

Hendry Winery; George Hendry, winemaker

2012 Hendry Vineyard, Napa Valley Barrel

Fermented Chardonnay – 928 cases

2012 Hendry Vineyard, Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon – 950 cases

Herb Lamb Vineyards; Michael Trujillo, winemaker

HL Vineyards 2012 Napa Valley

Cabernet Sauvignon – 300 cases

Two Old Dogs 2012 Napa Valley

Cabernet Sauvignon – 400 cases

Hesperian Wines; Philippe Langner, winemaker

2012 Kitoko Vineyard, Atlas Peak

Cabernet Sauvignon – 250 cases

Hopper Creek Winery; Barry Grushkowitz, winemaker

2012 Massa Ranch, Yountville Sauvignon Blanc

224 cases

2012 Hopper Creek Vineyard, Yountville Estate Merlot – 214 cases

Hyde Vineyards; Peter Hyde, winemaker

2012 Hyde Vineyard, Los Carneros Chardonnay

2012 Hyde Vineyard, Los Carneros Pinot Noir

Jericho Canyon; Nicholas Bleecher, Aaron Pott and Michel Rolland, winemakers

2013 Calistoga Sauvignon Blanc – 320 cases

2012 Calistoga “Chimera” – 760 cases

Joseph Carr; Aaron Pott, winemaker

2012 Rutherford Merlot – 100 cases

2012 Coombsville Cabernet Sauvignon – 500 cases

Keenan Winery; Michael Keenan, winemaker

2012 Spring Mountain District Cabernet Franc
480 cases

2012 Napa Valley Zinfandel – 612 cases

Krupp Brothers Wines; Jay Buoncristioni, winemaker

M5 2012 Stagecoach Vineyard, Atlas Peak

Cabernet Sauvignon - 200 cases

Veraison 2009 Stagecoach Vineyard, Atlas Peak

Cabernet Sauvignon – 1,600 cases

Lang + Reed Wine Company;

John Skupny, winemaker

2014 Napa Valley Chenin Blanc – 100 cases

2012 Napa Valley “Two Fourteen” Cabernet Franc
755 cases

Lobo Wines;

Kenn Vigoda and Victoria Coleman, winemakers

2012 Wulff Vineyards, Oak Knoll Pinot Noir

350 cases; Kenn Vigoda, winemaker

2012 Wulff Vineyards, Atlas Peak Cabernet Sauvignon

450 cases; Victoria Coleman, winemaker



Above: A quartet of members tasting reds.

Below: Strategizing with the wine list, instituted in 2008

Louis M. Martini Winery; Michael Martini, winemaker
 2014 Napa Valley Rosé – 200 cases
 2012 Thomann Station, Napa Valley Petite Sirah
 200 cases

Madonna Estate; Andrea Bartolucci, winemaker
 2012 Los Carneros Estate Pinot Noir – 2,500 cases
 2012 Los Carneros Estate Dolcetto – 600 cases

Mahoney Vineyards; Ken Foster, winemaker
 2012 Los Carneros Estate Pinot Noir – 1,200 cases
 2012 Mahoney Ranch Vineyard, Los Carneros Pinot
 Noir – 220 cases

MATERRA I Cunat Family Vineyards; Michael
 Trujillo and Bruce Regalia, winemakers
 2013 Oak Knoll District Viognier – 90 cases
 2009 Oak Knoll District Merlot – 1,250 cases

Monticello Vineyards; Chris Corley, winemaker
 2013 Oak Knoll Chardonnay – 224 cases
 2012 Napa Valley Proprietary Red Wine
 356 cases

Napa Wine Company; Rob Lawson and
 Lynn Watanabe, winemakers
 Ghost Block 2012 Yountville Cabernet Sauvignon
 700 cases; Rob Lawson, winemaker
 Oakville Winery 2012 Pelissa Vineyard, Oakville
 Cabernet Sauvignon – 1,900 cases
 Lynn Watanabe, winemaker

Orin Swift Cellars; Dave Phinney, winemaker
 2012 Tofanelli Vineyard, Calistoga Sauvignon Blanc
 900 cases

PEJU; Sara Fowler, winemaker
 2014 Napa Valley Rosé of Syrah – 460 cases
 2012 Napa Valley Petit Verdot – 1,000 cases
 2012 Napa Valley “Fifty-Fifty” – 900 cases

The PlumpJack Group; Aaron Miller and
 Danielle Cyrot, winemakers
 CADE 2012 Howell Mountain Estate
 Cabernet Sauvignon; Danielle Cyrot, winemaker
 PlumpJack Winery 2012 Oakville Estate
 Cabernet Sauvignon; Aaron Miller, winemaker

Pride Mountain Vineyards;
 Sally Johnson-Blum, winemaker
 2014 Sonoma Viognier – 1,108 cases
 2012 Napa/Sonoma Merlot – 5,350 cases

Rocca Family Vineyards; Paul Colantuoni, winemaker
 2012 Yountville Vineyard, Yountville Merlot
 150 cases
 2012 Grigsby Vineyard, Yountville
 Cabernet Sauvignon – 400 cases

St. Supéry Estate Vineyards and Winery;
 Michael Scholz, winemaker
 2013 Napa Valley Estate Virtú – 2,561 cases
 2012 Napa Valley Estate Cabernet Sauvignon
 18,393 cases

Saddleback Cellars; Nils Venge, winemaker
 2012 Oakville Estate Pinot Blanc – 350 cases
 2012 Napa Valley Cabernet Franc – 125 cases

Schramsberg Vineyards/J. Davies Vineyards
 Schramsberg 2011 Napa Valley “Querencia”
 250 cases;
 Sean Thompson and Hugh Davies, winemakers
 J. Davies 2012 Davies’ Vineyard, Diamond
 Mountain District Cabernet Sauvignon – 2,500 cases;
 Sean Thompson and Hugh Davies, winemakers
 J. Davies 2005 Davies’ Vineyard, Diamond
 Mountain District Cabernet Sauvignon – 1,800 cases;
 Hugh Davies, winemaker

Seavey Vineyard; Jim Duane, winemaker
 2012 Napa Valley Estate Cabernet Sauvignon
 2,200 cases

Silverado Vineyards; Jon Emmerich, winemaker
 2012 Mount George Vineyard, Coombsville
 Cabernet Sauvignon – 1,432 6-bottle cases

Snowden Vineyards;
 Diana Snowden Seysses, winemaker
 2014 Sunninghill Vineyard, Napa Valley
 Sauvignon Blanc – 173 cases
 2012 The Ranch, Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
 1,893 cases

Spottswoode Estate Vineyard and Winery;
 Aron Weinkauff, winemaker
 Spottswoode 2012 Saint Helena Estate
 Cabernet Sauvignon – 3,978 cases
 Lydenhurst 2012 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
 2,186 cases

Spring Mountain Vineyard; Susan Doyle, winemaker
 2012 Spring Mountain District Estate
 Sauvignon Blanc – 1,000 cases
 2012 Spring Mountain District Estate “Elevette”
 3,000 cases

Stags’ Leap Winery; Christophe Paubert, winemaker
 2013 Napa Valley Viognier – 4,093 cases
 2012 Coombsville Vineyard, Napa Valley
 Cabernet Sauvignon – 545 cases

Stony Hill Vineyard; Mike Chelini, winemaker
 2012 Stony Hill, Napa Valley Chardonnay
 2,188 cases
 2011 Stony Hill, Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
 350 cases

Storybook Mountain Vineyards; Jerry Seps, winemaker
 2012 Napa Valley Estate Grown Zinfandel
 550 cases
 2012 Napa Valley Estate Grown “Antaeus”
 500 cases

Swanson Vineyards; Robin Akhurst, winemaker
 2012 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon – 421 cases

Taderman Vineyards;
 Nils Venge and Tom Rinaldi, winemakers
 2013 Oakville Sauvignon Blanc – 300 cases
 2012 Oakville Sauvignon Blanc – 300 cases
 Nils Venge, winemaker
 2012 Oakville Cabernet Sauvignon – 600 cases
 2010 Oakville Cabernet Sauvignon – 500 cases
 Tom Rinaldi, winemaker



A trio of members comparing notes

Trefethen Family Vineyards; Bryan Kays, winemaker

- 2013 Oak Knoll Chardonnay – 20,000 cases
- 2012 Oak Knoll Cabernet Sauvignon – 8,000 cases

Trinchero Napa Valley; Mario Monticelli, winemaker

- 2011 Napa Valley Estate Meritage – 3,800 cases
- 2011 Chicken Ranch Vineyard, Napa Valley Merlot
2,400 cases
- 2011 Haystack Vineyard, Napa Valley
Cabernet Sauvignon – 1,700 cases

Truchard Vineyards; Sal De Ianni, winemaker

- 2012 Los Carneros Estate Syrah – 750 cases
- 2012 Los Carneros Estate Cabernet Sauvignon
5,000 cases

V. Sattui Winery; Brooks Painter, winemaker

- 2014 Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc – 2,100 cases
- 2011 Napa Valley “Paradiso” – 658 cases

Valance Wines; Michael Raymor, winemaker

- 2012 Rancho de los Arboles, Napa Valley
Cabernet Sauvignon – 75 cases

Villa Ragazzi; Nate Weis, winemaker

- 2012 Napa Valley Sangiovese – 84 cases
- 2012 Napa Valley “Faraona” – 61 cases

VinRoc; Michael Parmenter, winemaker

- 2012 Atlas Peak Cabernet Sauvignon – 275 cases
- 2012 Napa Valley “RTW” – 288 cases

Vincent Arroyo Winery; Matthew Moye, winemaker

- 2012 Calistoga Cabernet Sauvignon – 886 cases
- 2012 Rattlesnake Acres, Calistoga Petite Sirah
440 cases

Vineyard {511}; Rob Lloyd, winemaker

- 2012 Diamond Mountain District
Cabernet Sauvignon – 130 cases
- 2011 Diamond Mountain District
Cabernet Sauvignon – 90 cases



After seven, leaving The Grove

Wallis Family Estate;

Thomas Rivers Brown, winemaker

- 2012 Diamond Mountain District
Cabernet Sauvignon – 500 cases
- 2012 Diamond Mountain District Little Sister
Cabernet Sauvignon – 150 cases

Whitehall Lane Winery; Dean Sylvester, winemaker

- 2014 Rutherford Sauvignon Blanc – 10,000 cases
- 2012 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
10,000 cases

William Hill Estate Winery;

Ralph Holdenried, winemaker

- 2012 unfiltered Napa Valley Estate Chardonnay
200 cases
- 2010 Napa Valley Estate “Benchmark” – 200 cases

ZD Wines; Chris Pisani, winemaker

- 2013 Los Carneros Pinot Noir – 4,500 cases
- 2012 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
4,500 cases ■

Chronology of the Annual Tasting, 1963 - 2015

- 1963 *White Riesling* and *Cabernet Sauvignon* in former showroom of St. Helena Lumber Company with various wineries
- 1964 St. Helena Public Library, Carnegie Building is remodeled under the direction of Les Niemi, architect, to accommodate NVWL collections
- 1965 *Pinot Noir* in showroom of Valley Chevrolet, St. Helena with six wineries
- 1966 *Sherry* at Hurd Candle Studio, St. Helena with nine wineries
- 1966 *Johannisberg Riesling* in the gardens of Spottswoode with nine wineries
- 1967 *Cabernet Sauvignon* in the gardens of Spottswoode with eight wineries
- 1968 *Pinot Chardonnay* in the gardens of Spottswoode with eight wineries
- 1969 *Sauternes* in the gardens of Spottswoode with ten wineries
- 1970 *Johannisberg Riesling* in the gardens of Spottswoode with 11 wineries
- 1971 *Chablis type wines* in the poolside gardens of Beaulieu with ten wineries
- 1972 *Vins Rosé* on the lawns of Charles Krug Winery with 12 wineries
- 1973 Red wines other than Cabernet Sauvignon (*Gamay Beaujolais, Gamay Vivace, Grignolino, Napa Gamay, and Zinfandel*) at the Niebaum Estate of Oakville Vineyards with 12 wineries
- 1974 *Johannisberg Riesling* at the Niebaum Estate of Oakville Vineyards with 11 wineries
- 1975 *Chardonnay* on the lawns of Charles Krug Winery with 16 wineries
- 1976 *Cabernet Sauvignon* on the lawns of Charles Krug Winery with 21 wineries
- 1977 *Zinfandel* in the courtyard at Robert Mondavi Winery with 19 wineries
- 1978 *Johannisberg Riesling* in the courtyard of Robert Mondavi Winery with 24 wineries
- 1979 *Pinot Noir* at Inglenook with 25 wineries
- 1980 *Sauvignon Blanc* and *Chenin Blanc* at Sterling Vineyards with 22 wineries
- 1981 *Cabernet Sauvignon* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 29 wineries
- 1982 *Chardonnay* at Inglenook Vineyards with 51 wineries
- 1983 *Zinfandel* and *Pinot Noir* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 46 wineries
- 1984 *Riesling* and *Gewurztraminer* and related varieties at Robert Mondavi Winery with 33 wineries
- 1985 *Cabernet Sauvignon* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 76 wineries
- 1986 *Chardonnay* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 81 wineries
- 1987 *Cabernet Sauvignon* and *Merlot* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 94 wineries
- 1988 *Sauvignon Blanc* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 62 wineries
- 1989 *Red Wines other than Cabernet Sauvignon* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 52 wineries
- 1990 *Chardonnay* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 107 wineries
- 1991 *Cabernet Sauvignon* at Silverado Country Club with 96 wineries
- 1992 *Sauvignon Blanc* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 57 wineries
- 1993 *Red Wines other than Cabernet Sauvignon* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 99 wineries
- 1994 *Chardonnay* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 102 wineries
- 1995 *Cabernet Sauvignon* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 123 wineries
- 1996 *White Wines other than Chardonnay* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 72 wineries
- 1997 *Red Wines outside the Cabernet Sauvignon family* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 72 wineries
- 1998 *Chardonnay* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 101 wineries
- 1999 *Cabernet Sauvignon* and other *Red Bordeaux Varieties* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 108 wineries
- 2000 *White Wines other than Chardonnay* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 80 wineries
- 2001 *Red Wines beyond the Cabernet Sauvignon family* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 84 wineries
- 2002 *Vintner's Choice* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 126 wineries
- 2003 *Chardonnay* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 92 wineries
- 2004 *Cabernet Sauvignon and Related Varietals* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 112 wineries
- 2005 *White Wines* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 72 wineries
- 2006 *Red Wines other than Cabernet Sauvignon* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 80 wineries
- 2007 *Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Carménère, Malbec, Merlot, Petit Verdot, and their blends* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 98 wineries
- 2008 *White Wine Varietals* at Silverado Country Club & Resort with 56 wineries
- 2009 *Red Wines other than Cabernet Varieties* at Silverado Club & Resort with 67 wineries
- 2010 *Cabernet Varieties* at Silverado Resort & Spa with 88 wineries
- 2011 *White, Rosé and Sparkling Wines* at Silverado Resort & Spa with 63 wineries
- 2012 *Vintner's Choice of two wines: a current and older release* at Silverado Resort & Spa with 99 wineries
- 2013 *Winemakers Favorites, a Vintner's Choice* at Silverado Resort & Spa with 72 wineries
- 2014 *From Vineyard to Label: In Celebration of Terroir* at Silverado Resort & Spa with 76 wineries
- 2015 *Toasting the Twelves* at Silverado Resort & Spa with 75 wineries



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Wine Appreciation Faculty and REPORT Interviewees

Faculty consists primarily of Napa Valley winemakers, winegrowers, winery principals, and chefs. Instructors and interviewees for the last three years follow:

Garrett Ahnfeldt
Andy Beckstoffer
Lily Oliver Berlin
Wayne Burgstahler
Timm Crull
Kara Pecota Dunn
Mike Dunn
Danny Fay
Judd Finkelstein
Chris Hall
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A membership in the Napa Valley Wine Library Association sustains an incomparable collection of wine-related materials at the St. Helena Public Library and the opportunity to attend a number of wine education events during the year.

Free admission to the Annual Tasting is a benefit of membership, as is the subscription to our semi-annual Napa Wine Library REPORT.

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