



Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

October 2004

OWS's Upcoming Events

❖ **Toronto Chapter**

• **Southbrook Chardonnay Vertical, Tuesday, October 26, 2004**

The Triomphe and Triomphus are their premium labels. We will have the Triomphe from 2002, '01, '00 and '99. Then to compare, the Lailey Vineyard 2000 and the Triomphus 2002, '00 and '98, the latter two in magnums. Bill Redelmeier, owner of Southbrook, will give us the background on the vintages, vineyard selection and winemaking styles leading us through an exceptional tasting of outstanding wines.

• **Canadian Wine Awards, November, 2004**

• **Unusual Grape Varieties, January, 2005**

The Wine Doctor, Edward Finstein will be leading us in this tasting event of wines made from uncommon grape varieties in Ontario.

❖ **Niagara Chapter**

• **Annual Dinner at EastDell Estates Winery, Tuesday, November 9, 2004**

Guest speaker, Tim Hudak, will talk about the latest political issues surrounding the wine industry and answer your questions.

• **Sparkles & Ice at Palatine Hills Winery, Tuesday, December 7, 2004**

We will be featuring sparkling wine and Icewine.

• **Wine of Kings & Queens at Chateau des Charmes Winery, January 2005**

We will be featuring the wines of past Grape Kings and Queens.

Write-ups on Past OWS Events

❖ **Fruit Wine Tasting,**

Featherstone Winery, August 30, 2004

By Yvonne Halliday

The weather certainly co-operated for this event as we sat out on the wrap-around verandah surrounding Featherstone Winery. We started off the evening with a few words from each person on our panel of speakers. Our speakers ranged from David Johnson of Featherstone who makes mostly grape wines and only one fruit wine, to Paul Lizak of Legends who makes about 70% grape

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wines and 30% fruit wines, to Rebecca and Gerald Goertz of Sunnybrook Farms who make exclusively fruit wines, to Jim Warren (Executive Director of the Fruit Wines of Canada) who has been a fore-front advocate of the fruit wine industry for many years.

We discovered that unlike grape wines, which are governed by VQA regulations, fruit wines have their own regulatory body called QC. This is because there are



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so many different factors that must be compensated for. With fruit wines, you often have to add water to the highly concentrated syrup that is extracted. It's also not uncommon to have to add sugar to otherwise overly tart fruits. Yet another reason is that a 3 on the sugar scale for grapes (semi sweet), can differ greatly from a rating of 3 for elderberries (off-dry) and a rating of 3 for raspberries, etc. The sugar scale for fruit wines is all over the board and almost impossible to compare to each other.

Some of the major differences in producing fruit wines seem to be the widespread variance of harvest times for each fruit, the huge "pulp" quantity difference that has to be filtered, and the cost of the fruit. It wasn't surprising to hear how much a bottle of raspberry wine costs after you realize that the fruit costs multiple times more than the same quantity of grapes, and you get less useable juice.

The wines ranged from light and dry, to rich and full, to sweet and flavourful. And although nearly all of them were award winners, in the end, the Featherstone Cranberry and Applewood Mead (sparkling honey wine) tied for first preference for table wines, and the Sunnybrook Black Raspberry took first preference for the dessert wines.

A special thank you goes to David Johnson, Paul Lizak, Rebecca & Gerald Goertz, and Jim Warren for leading the tasting, to Louise Engel and Featherstone Winery for hosting the evening, and to Bert Richards for his assistance in organizing and arranging the event.

Ontario Winery Events

Lake Erie North Shore

❖ Colio

3rd Annual Harvest Hoedown

Saturday, October 2, 11:00am to 4:00pm

Featuring "The Back 40" (country Rocks but Bluegrass Rules) & the "Country Note Cloggers".

There will be free tours of the winery and food available for purchase. Sponsored by Zeta Kappa Sorority to raise funds for Santa Sacs this Christmas.

Free admission. For more information contact Gail Heffernan 519 738 9318 or toll free 1 800 265 1322.

❖ Grape Tree

Customer Appreciation Weekend at Grape Tree

Saturday, October 2, 11:00am to 6:00pm, Sunday October 3, 11:00am to 3:00pm)

We feel badly that we were not able to host our annual Harvest Festival this year as we had hoped. Instead,

please join us on for a Customer Appreciation Weekend. We will be serving up some fall fare in the form of a hearty autumn stew along with some great locally baked bread from Lakeside Bakery in Leamington. A salad will accompany this hot dish and of course, we will be sampling all of our great wines, which are currently on sale at about 40% off the regular prices (please see chart below). We hope that many of you will be able to join us. There is no charge for these two days.

Niagara Peninsula - East

❖ Reif

Wine and Cheese Pairing 101

Saturday, October 23, 5:00pm to 7:00pm

For years home entertainers, chefs and event planners have propagated the idea that wine and cheese are perfect partners. However, like many 'marriages', some matches work better than others. Explore the cause and effect of matching a range of Canadian cheeses with an equally diverse range of wines.

Kathy Guidi, founder of Artisan Cheese Marketing, joins Reif Estate's Sommelier, Carol LePage, to present this unique tasting that combines wine and food pairing tips with gastronomic pleasures.

\$20 per person. Reservation required. Contact Andrea Nelson at 905 468 7738 or

andrea.nelson@reifwinery.com

Niagara Peninsula - West

❖ Cave Spring

Chard. By a Nose

October 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30 and 31, 11:00am and 2:00pm

Known for almost two decades for their finesse and elegance, the Chardonnays of Cave Spring Vineyard exemplify the terroir of the Beamsville Bench. Taste wines going back as far as 1998.

\$10 per person. Reservations required. To reserve call 905 562 3581, Ext. 302.

❖ EastDell

Harvest Tours & Tastings

October, 2, 3 and 9, 10, 11:00am and 2:00pm

Catch the harvest season in action. Pick a grape or two yourself on guided tours. Finish in the boutique with a tasting of three wines that capture the essence of autumn. \$5 per person. Call 905 563 9463 to reserve.

Feast Of Plenty

October 9, 11, seatings from 5:00pm

Thanksgiving's on the menu with a hearty three-course supper that celebrates autumn's delicious offerings.

\$29.95 per person. \$14.95 for children 12 and under.



Thanksgiving Day Brunch

October 10, three seatings, 10:00am, 12:00pm and 2:00pm

Let's talk turkey with all the trimmings and more for our special holiday brunch buffet.

Reserve early. \$22.95 per person, \$10.95 for children 12 and under.

Chef's Table

October 22

Chef Guy Gnadinger-Harris brings the theatre of the kitchen to your table during this deliciously intimate evening of fine wine and food. Chef and your exclusive wine expert share their wine and food insights as you experience the progressive tastes (and part of the preparation) of a wine-paired five-course menu created and presented specially for this table.

\$95 per person. Minimum 6 people, maximum 12. Reservations required.

Halloween Festival

October 30, 31

Everything's coming up pumpkins, on the menu and in the vineyard. Kids, find our pumpkin in the vineyard for a trick and a treat. Enjoy gourd carving demonstrations or paint-your-own pumpkin for charity. Prize for all costumes.

On Saturday, enjoy a special two-course luncheon, \$19.95 per person. Kids choose from a special Halloween kids menu for free (with parent's purchase, max 2 kids per family, \$3.95 for additional kids).

Sunday, brunch takes on Halloween with some extra fun offerings. Three seatings, 10:00am, 12:00pm and 2:00pm. \$22.95 per person, \$10.95 for children 12 and under.

❖ Malivoire

Malivoire Fall Touring Weekend

November 20, 21. We will start taking reservations on October 12, 2004. Appointments available every half hour from 10:00am to 4:00pm.

Our Fall Touring Weekend is an intimate opportunity for us to visit with you at the winery. We invite you to join the staff of Malivoire at a pre-arranged time. Our winery and vineyard staff will show you around in small groups, no more than 15, so we can best address your questions about our vineyards, our winery and our wines. Please join us for this celebration of the 2004 harvest. New releases, delicious food, and other surprises await! This event has proven very popular in the past, so do not wait to book your appointment time.

No charge to participate, but reservations are mandatory. You are welcome to bring friends - they will thank you for thinking of them! Please call 1 866 644 2244.

❖ Thomas & Vaughan

A Toast To Riesling

October 1 to 10

Enjoy a comparative tasting between 2001 Botrytis Affected Riesling and 2001 and 2002 Riesling paired with smoked turkey mousse canapé with fresh sage and cranberries.

\$6.95 per person.

❖ Vineland

Canadian Living Magazine Thanksgiving Menu

October 9, 10, 11

Visit our 4-Diamond restaurant to enjoy a menu designed to celebrate our editorial feature in the October issue of Canadian Living Magazine to highlight visiting wine country and our estate during the bountiful harvest. Food Editor Elizabeth Baird visited our estate and worked in conjunction with our chefs to offer selections from this menu in this magazine and of course, it would not be thanksgiving without some traditional favourites like Turkey, cranberry and squash but enjoy the classics of the season prepared as only our culinary team can.

\$70 per person plus premium wine match. Wine Club members pricing includes wine pairing. To join our Wine Club, call Blayne at 1 888 846 3526 Ext. 29. For dining reservations, call 1 888 846 3526 Ext. 33.

Prince Edward County

❖ Huff

Taste!

October 9th

Huff Estates will be at Picton's Crystal Palace for the 3rd annual TASTE! A celebration of regional cuisine with over 45 exhibitors from throughout the County displaying their wine or culinary specialties.

Tickets are \$12.50 per person which includes parking, a crystal tasting glass, 2 sampling tickets, free cooking demonstrations and seminars and live jazz entertainment. For more info visit www.thecounty.ca/taste

Toronto(GTA)

❖ Archibald

2nd Annual Mad Hatter's Tea Party

Saturday, October 9, 1:00pm to 4:00pm

The purpose of this event is to rejoice and give thanks for what we do have. We invite you to celebrate the beauty of Clarington's countryside, Mother Natures' stunning fall colours, the joy of family and friends ... with fun and silliness! mad hats, t-shirts & any other outlandish attire are the dress code. Special presentation - Super Dogs!!



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Local musicians and tellers of tall tales share their talents.

Call Sandy at 905 263 2396 to share!

Ontario Restaurant Events

❖ **After Hours Bistro**

Wine & Dine

Thursday, October 28, 7:00pm

Executive Chef Darren Stoute prepares a four course progressive dinner paired with wines of Niagara, including Konzelmann, Strewn and Lakeview.

\$45 per person, taxes included, gratuities extra. RSVP by October 21 by calling 905 357 2503.

After Hours Bistro and Bar, 5470 Victoria Ave., Niagara Falls

❖ **The Hobby Horse Arms**

Winemaker's Dinner Featuring Reif Estate

Saturday, October 23, reception - 5:30pm, dinner - 6:00pm

\$60.00 per person plus taxes and gratuity. Reservations required. Phone 905 852 6126 for details and reservations.

The Hobby Horse Arms, 37 Main St. N., Uxbridge

❖ **JW's Steakhouse**

2nd Anniversary

For the entire month of October JW's Steakhouse will be celebrating its two year anniversary with a 5 course menu exalting Ontario's Autumn harvest.

Wines complementing each dish have been selected from medal winners at the 2004 Ontario Wine Awards.

2nd Anniversary Menu

- Caramelized parsnip & apple soup with peppered duck shavings paired with Vineland Estates Dry Riesling 2003
- Maple cured salmon baked autumn spiced acorn squash & radish seedlings paired with Lailey Vineyard Chardonnay 2000
- Blackberry & yogurt sorbet
- Grilled veal chop black pepper & herb spätzle with a tangle of wild fall mushrooms truffled herb brodo paired with Thomas & Vaughan Cellars Estate Meritage 2000
- Apple tarte tatin paired with Henry of Pelham Select Late Harvest Vidal 2003

JW's Steakhouse, 525 Bay St., Toronto.

❖ **Milford Bistro**

Winemaker's Dinner Featuring Huff Estates

Saturday, October 23, 7:00pm to 10:00pm

Frederic Picard and Chef Michael Potters have paired together our Huff wines and wonderful cuisine for a

memorable evening.

\$75 per person. Includes four-course dinner with tasting portions of wine. Taxes and gratuities not included. For more info visit www.milfordbistro.com

The Milford Bistro, 3048 County Road 10, Milford

❖ **Paradiso**

Winemaker's Dinner Featuring Cave Spring Cellars

Tuesday, October 19, 7:00pm

Join Thomas Pennachetti as you experience a specially prepared menu from the chefs at Paradiso Restaurant paired with the wines of Cave Spring Cellars.

\$65.00 per person. Call 905 639 1176 for reservations.

Paradiso Restaurant, 2041 Pine Street, Burlington, Ontario.

❖ **Riverbend**

Winemaker's Dinner Featuring Reif Estate

Tuesday, October 26, reception - 6:30pm, dinner - 7:30pm

\$95 per person plus taxes and gratuity. Reservations required. Phone 905 468 8866 for details and reservations.

Riverbend Inn and Vineyard, 16104 Niagara River Parkway, Niagara-on-the-Lake

❖ **Wellington Court Restaurant**

Winemaker's Dinner Featuring Legends Estates

Thursday, October 21, 6:30pm

Executive Chef, Erik Peacock and Legends Estates Winery President, Paul Lizak combine fabulous atmosphere, fantastic food and phenomenal wine to thrill your senses. Etch this evening in your memory as you savour six courses of sumptuous culinary and wine excellence.

Seating limited to 40. Call to reserve your place 905 682 5518.

The Wellington Court Restaurant, 11 Wellington Street, St. Catharines

❖ **Wigamog Inn**

October Feature Winery, Malivoire Wine Company

Wigamog Inn Resort is proud to continue its tradition of supporting our truly exceptional Ontario Wineries.

What better way to start off our fall winery weekends than to feature Malivoire Wine Company, home of 2004 Ontario Winemaker of the year Ann Sperling?

During the month of October Wigamog Inn Resort will be featuring the wines of this excellent winery. Malivoire produces ultra-premium wines and is located on the Beamsville Bench in the Niagara Peninsula. Its unique gravity winery coupled with its strong vineyard



focus form a solid foundation for the art of winemaking.

The highlight of this month long partnership will be a winery dinner on Friday October 22nd pairing their world class wines with a specially created four course country gourmet dinner. The dinner will be hosted by Malivoire representative Paul DeCampo and Wigamog Inn Resort Executive Chef James Jennings. Once again the focus of the dinner will be the art of wine and food pairing.

The dinner can be added to your overnight stay for \$29.95 per person or for those wishing to attend the dinner only, the price is \$59.95. The Wigamog Inn Resort is pleased once again to donate \$2.00 per dinner guest to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation.

Wigamog Inn Resort will be continuing it's support of Ontario Wineries throughout the upcoming year as each month they will be featuring the wines of a different Ontario Winery. The week will include tasting and advice on food pairing as well as the opportunity to meet with some of Ontario's truly world class winemakers. Look for news early in November of our next Winemaker's dinner on Friday November 26th featuring David Johnson from Featherstone Estates Winery; 2003 Grape King and Ontario Vineyard of the year.

Wigamog Inn Resort is a four season, full service recreational resort and country inn overlooking Lake Kashagawigamog and surrounded by the rolling hills of the Haliburton Highlands. We pride ourselves in providing an intimate atmosphere, charming accommodation and superb dining in beautiful surroundings.

For more details or reservations please contact the Wigamog Inn Resort at 1-800-661-2010 or email at www.wigamoginn.com Feel free to visit the Wigamog Inn Resort at www.wigamoginn.com.

Other Ontario Wine Events

❖ Fall Harvest Winery Tour

Hosted by Mackenzie Hall, Depart Mackenzie Hall at 11:00am, return 7:00pm

Sunday, October 3rd

With Steven Brook as your guide, you will visit D'Angelo Winery in Amherstburg, Sanson Estate Winery in McGregor, Colio Estate Winery in Harrow and Grape Tree Estate Wines in Leamington (where you will be enjoying dinner).

\$89 includes transportation, tasting, taxes and dinner.

Please call 519 255 7600 to book your place.

❖ Fruits of the Vine

Harvest Fundraiser for Progress Place

Saturday, October 30, 2:00pm to 5:00pm

At Dora Keogh, 141 Danforth Avenue, just east of Broadview on the south side, sister operation and neighbour of Allen's Restaurant on the Danforth.

Wine tasting demonstrations, Ontario VQA wine tasting stations, silent auction, live auction, hors d'oeuvres, cheese pairings, fruit wine, door prizes. A taste of Dora Keogh's Irish pub

\$60 per person for wine tastings and delectable hors d'oeuvres with a sizeable charitable donation receipt. Call Caroline or Joelle at 416 323 0223 or e-mail chughey@progressplace.org to secure your tickets.

All proceeds to benefit Progress Place, a not-for-profit organization which provides a full range of social, vocational, housing and recreational opportunities for men and women with serious mental illness.

❖ Gala for a Cure

Thursday, October 14 at 6:00pm

Gala for a Cure, in support of children with cancer, will be held at the Queen's Landing Hotel, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. This is being chaired by one of our members, Peter Gill. The Niagara wines featured will be from Jackson-Triggs at the reception and Creekside wines with each course for the dinner.

Also featured will be a vertical tasting of Joseph Phelps "Insignia" and live and silent auctions of fine wines, art, dinners, Florida vacation, etc.

\$135 per person. Black tie optional. For information call Peter or Judy Gill at 905 468 5190, e-mail gillhome@cogeco.ca.

❖ Taste

Prince Edward County's Celebration Of Regional Cuisine

Saturday, October 9, 11:00am to 5:00pm

It's our third annual celebration of great food, wine and all things culinary. Last year's show gave 2,200 visitors an appetite for our regional cuisine. What is regional cuisine? It's local, fresh and often uniquely crafted foods and beverages - some traditional and some thoroughly modern. And all of it nurtured, grown and produced right here in this special part of the world.

Come to the Crystal Palace in Picton to enjoy sample-sized portions of some pretty fabulous dishes, prepared by world-class chefs from Prince Edward County and beyond. Our farmers, producers, wineries, chefs and restaurants are proud to share their bounty with you. Inside the beautiful old Crystal Palace and in big airy tents outside, you can feast on sample-size gourmet foods at sample-sized prices. Sampling tickets are 50 cents and delicious foods and wines cost from 1 to 6

tickets. Enjoy a fabulous food festival and try everything! Our seminars will be hosted in the Blue Bird Building (adjacent to the Crystal Palace). ALL seminars are free. Seating is first come first serve. Via rail round trip door prize!

\$12.50 admission includes a souvenir wine glass, parking, seminars, sampling tickets (2) to start your tasting and cool live jazz. It's a grown-up event restricted to 19 years and over. tickets are available only at the door. For more information call the TASTE! Hot Line at 613 393 2796 or www.taste.thecounty.ca. Seating for seminars is limited and on a first come first served basis.

Ontario Wine Industry News

❖ Canadian Award Winning Red Extends Wine Family

Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, July 2004

Trius, a name synonymous with award winning classic Canadian red wines has grown again. Fifteen years since the debut of Trius Red, the winemaking team at Hillebrand has introduced Trius single varietal reds, including Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Merlot. Created in a style that is approachable and fruit forward, the wines will appeal to a broad range of wine consumers.

The wines were inspired by a range of comments made during an exercise where wine writers blended their own version of Trius Red. The writers commented on the exceptional quality of the wines on their own before being blended and thus sparked an idea in the minds of the winemaking team.

Trius Red, the popular blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Merlot was introduced to Canadian



wine consumers in 1989, and since its debut has been awarded top honours in international wine competitions including the prestigious Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande Trophy for the 1991 Trius Red.

❖ Grape Grower of the Year

(Photo - Fred Couch)

The Grape "King" (Queen?) this year is Livia Sipos of Crown Bench Estates.

Ms. Sipos is a member of a long line of proud farmers, having farmed fruit, vineyards and poultry in the Niagara Peninsula for over forty years.

She is a graduate from Rittenhouse Public School (Vineland Station), Beamsville District Secondary School (Beamsville), and Centennial College (Toronto). Livia worked for a large advertising agency but left to raise a family.

Nine years ago, with husband Peter Kocsis, she decided to purchase one of the oldest planted vineyards on the Beamsville Bench. It took five years of hard work to get the vineyard into shape. At the same time, she established a small boutique winery.

❖ It's MURDER in the Wine Business!

Tony Aspler wanted us to let you know that his three hard-cover novels about fictional wine-writer/detective Ezra Brant are now available at a reduced price direct from him:

- Blood is Thicker than Beaujolais
- The Beast of Barbaresco
- Death on the Douro

The ideal birthday or Christmas gift for the wine lover/mystery buff in your life! Tony will autograph copies to you or your designated recipient. One title \$12.84, includes GST, + \$6 postage/handling. Set of three: \$32.10, includes GST, + \$8 postage/handling. To order, email tony.aspler@sympatico.ca. Please stipulate title(s). Or, send a cheque or money orders to: Tony Aspler, 53 Craighurst Ave., Toronto ON M4R 1J9

Feature Article

❖ The Story Of Canada's Icewine

By Hrayr Berberoglu

The Vitis Vinifera vine and Icewine (Canadian spelling) were, up to recent years, alien terms in Canada.

Vitis Vinifera vines suitable for making dry wines were first planted in the early 1960's by stubborn European immigrants in the Niagara Peninsula, ignoring the advice of scientists who firmly believed that the severe winters of the region were too cold for delicate Vitis Vinifera vines to survive. Well, were they wrong!

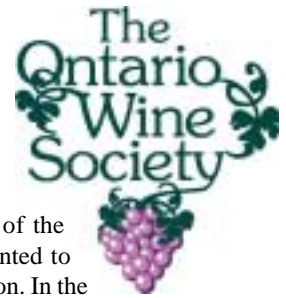
The Free Trade Agreement signed in 1988 between Canada and the U.S.A. presented a unique opportunity to produce better wines, as it forced wineries to compete with much less expensive American wines that threatened to flood all provincial markets.

Meanwhile, Walter Hainle, a German immigrant from Hamburg had started making wine at home in B C's Okanagan Valley to enjoy more palatable wines as he

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could not get used to the alien smell of *Vitis Labrusca* or even hybrid grape wines. He then remembered a delicacy in Germany when the harvest warranted it, and always in extremely small quantities. These extremely aromatic and sweet wines, called in German, Eiswein, had always intrigued him. In 1973, Walter Hainle produced an Eiswein, 40 litres in all, from a batch of grapes that accidentally froze before harvesting. He thought the wine was similar to the ones he remembered tasting in his youth in Germany. Soon this type of wine gained wide recognition in British Columbia's wine circles, and the news reached Ontario shortly after.

T.G Bright's, since absorbed into the Vincor conglomerate, had planted experimental plots of vinifera and hybrid grapes under the auspices of the company's French winemaker Adhemar de Chaunac.

Among the hybrid grapes, there was one variety with a thick skin and of relatively pleasant flavour, Adhemar de Chaunac asked the vineyard manager to leave a few rows of grapes to freeze on the vine before harvesting. He then experimented to produce an Icewine with the help of John Paroshy who had obtained his doctorate in oenology at Geisenheim in Germany.

John Paroshy recalls producing a small quantity of fine Icewine by 1979. The production of approximately 100 cases of Icewine was never advertised widely, or marketed, extensively but sold to corporate clients and a few selected individuals. Meanwhile Walter Hainle in B C was producing Icewine annually from a variety called Okanagan Riesling that has no resemblance to the true Riesling, but can yield passable wines. In 1988 when Walter Hainle opened his own winery, he planted the true Riesling, which in time yielded very fine Germanic style icewines.

A few years before, in 1982 Peter Gamble, a young winemaker of Hillebrand Estates tried to make Icewine for his personal use, but an unfortunate accident spoiled the experiment. A year later Icewine caught the attention of Donald Ziraldo, the co-founder of Inniskillin Wines, coincidentally also in the Vincor stable now, and Karl Kaiser, his winemaker and business partner.

Karl Kaiser set aside a few rows of Vidal for late harvesting, but he did not know how to or forgot to protect them. Ravenous birds ate all the grapes. Hillebrand's first Icewine was successfully offered to the public in 1983, and ever since the winery produces a certain amount of this aromatic and sweet wine. Over time, Hillebrand's Icewine making techniques evolved. Now the winery produces one that is barrel-fermented and barrel aged.

Walter Strehn, the first winemakers of Pelee Island Winery attempted to make icewine in 1983, but took the precaution to net the vines to protect the fruit from birds. Unfortunately, a few birds were caught in the nets and he

had severe problems with the officials of the Ministry of Natural resources. They wanted to charge him for trapping birds out of season. In the end, the charges were dropped but the winery lost \$25,000 worth of fruit. Luckily, Walter Strehn had saved enough frozen Vidal grapes to make an Icewine of which the LCBO bought 100 cases, but could not sell the wine. The shipment was subsequently returned, but luckily Pelee Island Winery was successful in selling the returned wine to Americans at six times the price LCBO had paid.

Icewine, however precious and good it was, consumers were reluctant to buy it mid-1980's for \$20 per 375 ml bottle. In 1989, Reif shipped a bottle to Robert Parker Jr., the influential lawyer turned wine critic, and once he wrote it up in his bi-monthly tasting notes, sales skyrocketed. Suddenly, Inniskillin, Hillebrand, Reif and Pelee Island had to ration their Icewine production. Some even presold it at \$25 a bottle in 1990. I remember buying one!

Konzelmann, started his winery in 1986, and immediately made Icewine from Riesling he had planted in his vineyards along the Lake Ontario shore. Up to that time, winemakers preferred Vidal for its ability to resist shattering when frozen. This variety has a thick skin, whereas Riesling's thin skin is too delicate to resist the forces of expansion when frozen.

Today, practically all Ontario wineries and a good number of B.C. establishments produce Icewine because of internal and external high demand.

The huge success came when a 1989 vintage Inniskillin Icewine was awarded double gold during the biannual Vinexpo Exposition in Bordeaux in 1991. Donald Ziraldo and Karl Kaiser at the time the owners of Inniskillin, made sure to receive country wine free publicity with this prestigious award.

Today, at least one winery, Royal de Maria produces exclusively Icewine from a number of *Vitis Vinifera* varieties including Riesling, Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Franc and Merlot. Of course Vidal is ever present and represents the largest icewine production in Ontario.

Along with sales successes, prices have increased disproportionately, and, today, for most wine consumers of moderate means Icewine is unaffordable. In 2002 the federal government signed an agreement with the EU for export, and if successful prices may still jump. Meanwhile in 2003, there was still Icewine in tanks from the 1999 vintage. The 2003 vintage was very small and hopefully the inventory on hand can be reduced somewhat in 2004.

Book Review

❖ A Wine Balance

A Fool and Forty Acres: Conjuring a Vineyard Three Thousand Miles from Burgundy

By Geoff Heinrichs, McClelland & Stewart, 275 pages, \$34.99

By David Lawrason, reprinted with permission from David Lawrason and the Globe and Mail.

Sitting here in 2004, where we are transfixed by the likes of Paris Hilton trying to survive a spell in the country, it's difficult to imagine one could still find an authentic tale of a rugged pioneer hoeing a dream from harsh Canadian soil.

Geoff Heinrichs is a modern version and, in writing this memoir, he provides an absorbing glimpse into the intricacies and toils of creating a vineyard from scratch. Plus a vivid, living history of Ontario's Prince Edward County, the achingly pastoral peninsula that juts into Lake Ontario just west of Kingston.

The author is certainly not a fool. Heinrichs is studious, thoughtful and forthright, with the ability to write very well. Indeed, the former national affairs editor of Frank magazine and freelance writer has partially financed his almost 10-year yeomanship in the vineyard by writing and editing.

He has become the guru of grape-growing in Ontario's newest wine region, writing not only this book, which will become the bible of the wine movement here, but a previous how-to manual for the dozens of would-be winemakers who have come to the County, as locally known. Indeed, the grape rush is on. Four wineries opened there since June, doubling the number already sprouted in the new millennium. And more land is purchased and planted every season, despite the potential for wicked, vine-crushing winters like those experienced in 2003 and 2004. The buzz about Prince Edward County is that it has "great dirt," a combination of gravel, limestone and granite uncannily similar to that of Burgundy, which happens to lie at a very similar latitude. And, Burgundy is the ancestral home of pinot noir, the holy grail of red wine grapes.

It's a difficult vine and a confounding wine, one that attracts dreamers (but rarely schemers) like moths to a flame, be it in Oregon's Dundee Hills, New Zealand's Otago region, California's Carneros or Walker Bay in South Africa. It only seems to find its true home in very particular (cool) micro-climates, or as the French call them, terroirs. Heinrichs happens to have been one of the first to sense (actually dogged research) that the County might be another terra firma for this grape. But he readily acknowledges others who came before him: one Dorland Noxon, more than 130 years ago, whose County

wine won a prize at an 1876 exposition in Philadelphia, and vineyardist Phil Mathewson in the early 1990s.

He touches on some who have followed, as well, certainly those who have become friends and clients to his consulting service, like well-known Toronto chef Jamie Kennedy. But some other pioneering growers he ignores, so this is not the complete modern history of wine-growing in the County.

But it is laden with local history, woven among detailed natural studies. Often I recalled the long, richly detailed pastoral works of Thomas Hardy. Yet it is nicely paced and edited to forestall tedium. Just when you think it's veering too far into the arcane, an unexpected relevance or witticism rights the balance.

There is an obsessive quality to Heinrichs, as with many who get involved with wine, and I was curious how this played out on his family life. His wife and young children, who were uprooted from Toronto to become part of his quest, are warmly but sparsely mentioned in the early chapters. He recounts how it was his responsibility to tend to clay pots growing ivy from his wife's wedding bouquet, and how he frequently had to rescue the ivy before it dried up.

By the end, with the birth of a child in the elevator at Picton's hospital, with his daughters delighting in their environment, and with his first bottles of pinot noir lying in his cellar, his dream seems fulfilled.

Unlike the early pioneers, buffered by the slow passage of time and ideas, Heinrichs gets to worry almost immediately about the future development and commercialization of Prince Edward County, for which he is at least partially responsible.

"In Niagara, the industrial and entertainment complexes [around the wine industry] arise on unserviced agricultural land, eat up the acres, and require large septic systems and copious amounts of well water, sowing dissent through the local communities," he worries. "I fear the disease will spread to Prince Edward County."

Stay tuned: His next book may be a battle cry to save the County from success.

David Lawrason, editor-in-chief of Canada's Wine Access magazine, first wrote about Geoff Heinrichs and Prince Edward County in TheGlobe and Mail in 1999.

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