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Overview Picture Galleries

These picture galleries add another, and hopefully more easily digestible, dimension to the lengthy descriptions of what we do.

The first three pages document what it takes to have a vineyard and facilities to process the grapes and mature the wine:

- Planting a Vineyard: documents the site preparation and planting of our second vineyard in 2014-5
- Building our Winery: documents the time-lapse construction of our winery building in 2007
- Building a Cellar: documents expanding our cellar facility in 2013, and

The pages that follow document the harvests, and grape processing in each year. They highlight the fun we have with our friends to celebrate whatever nature produced.

Previous page: Home
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Next Page: Planting a vineyard
Last updated: January 3, 2016
Planting a Vineyard (2015)

The planting of our second vineyard is documented in detail in the VINEYARD section. Here is a excerpt of the key pictures.

1. Ripping the field
2. Terracing the vineyard
3. Spreading the mushroom compost
4. Drilling the endpost holes
5. Cementing in the endposts
6. Drilling the plant holes
7. Inserting the soaker hoses

8. Fertilizing and backfilling the holes

9. Hammering in the poles

10. Pulling wires

11 Ditchwitch irrigation trenches

12 Irrigation controls and piping

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Next page: 2009 Building a Winery
Here are some architectural drawings. The pictures show lower and upper level floor-plans and cross-sections.

1. Ground Floor

2. Top Floor
3. Cross Section through cellar

4. Cross Section from outside

Here is a time lapse sequence of pictures during the construction process

1. Sep 29, 2007 Start of excavation
2. Nov 29, 2007 Framing the building floor
3. Dec 16, 2007 Framing the cellar walls
4. Jan 22, 2008 Framing the upper floor
5. Feb 6, 2008 Framing the top
6. Apr 6, 2008 Framing the roof
7. Jul 8, 2008 Sealing the roof
8. Aug 28, 2008 Preparing the driveway
9. Sep 4, 2008 Planting the roof
10. Sep 4, 2008 All done!
Building a Cellar (2012)

In 2012 we rebuilt a part of our barn into temperature controlled bottle cellar because we ran out of storage space. When building the winery we had not contemplated the fact that our wine needs to be cellared at least 3-4 years before it becomes drinkable and 10 years before it reaches its peak. So we needed storage space for 5-6,000 bottles.

1. Stripping old frame and upgrading cement floor
2. Reframing walls and adding aircon ducts
3. Reframing complete
4. Adding insulation
5. Finishing with inside walls and racks

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Previous page: 2008 Building a Winery
Top of this page: Go
Next page: 2000 Harvest
2000 Vintage

We picked our first crop, close to 1 ton, on October 22, 2000. The quality of the grapes was pretty miserable due to poor vineyard management leading to a mildew infection. Harvest was on a very hot day and we sold all the grapes to Cinabar which managed the vineyard.

1 Looking at bunch of miserable grapes
2 Shahri Russell, Kathy Moore & Liz Owen getting instructions
3 Jane Ogle, Donna & Kathy Moore cooling off

Previous page: 2012 Building a Cellar
Top of page: Go
Next Page: 2003 Vintage
Last updated: January 4, 2016
In 2001 we let a new vineyard management company (Anzalone) pick the harvest, close to 2 tons; and we sold the grapes to Clos Tita, a small winery nearby. In 2002 we abandoned the crop due to mildew. In 2003 we picked ourselves with the help of a Mexican crew from Anzalone. The crop was around 1.75 tons and was sold again to Clos Tita.

1 Mexican picking crew arrives

2 Mexican crew in action

3 Donna picking

4 Sis Dressman picking

5 Liz Owen picking

6 Judy Kaplan and Ingeborg’s friend picking
7 All picked

8 Rick Anzalone checking

9 Rick Anzalone relaxed
In 2004 we lost the crop to a mildew infection again due to poor vineyard management. In 2005 we let Anzalone pick the crop, around 1.6 tons and sold it again to Clos Tita. In 2006 we took over vineyard management and for the first time picked with a crew of friends, close to 2 tons, which we sold again to Clos Tita.

1 Byron Anderson and his vintage truck

2 Connie Mitchel picking

3 Saundra Hill picking

4 Ann Morrissey picking
5 Mike Morrissey picking

6 Alan Hill and Donna picking

7 Tyson Hill picking

8 free lunch for all the pickers
2009 Vintage

In 2007 & 2008, we continued to manage the vineyard ourselves and picked between 1.75 and 2 tons which we again sold to Clos Tita. 2009 was our first vintage we processed in our own new winery. We picked slightly over 2 tons of which we sold 0.8 tons to Kathryn Kennedy winery. Then we tried our luck in making our first wine. We have no pictures from the picking, only from destemming the bunches and crushing the berries; and from punching down the cap during fermentation. We bottled our first wine in March 2012.

2009 Crush

The 2009 Crush represented the first opportunity to test our destemmer and fermentation tank. Note the destemmer sits directly on top of the fermentation tank; there is no berry sorting.

1 Greg Martin with a bucket of grapes

2 Steve Rossi and Greg Martin

3 Me getting bucket to pour into destemmer

4 Aran Healy watching berries fall into fermentation tank
Punch down

Punching down the cap in the first fermentation tank, after the destemmer was removed, was a balancing act

1 Standing on top of fermentation tank  2 Punching down cap

Bottling the 2009 Vintage

The fermented wine spent 2 ½ years in barrels until we decided it was ready for bottling in March of 2012. We racked each barrel into a steel tank and bottled each separately – two regular barrels and a half barrel. This was a 1-man show with no help.
1 Filling the bottles

2 Putting in the cork

3 Adjusting the cork depth setting

4 Voila – the first bottle of CH

Previous page: 2006 Vintage
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Next Page: 2010 Vintage
Last updated: January 4, 2016
2010 was the first year we felt the dramatic effects of poor pruning in 2008 (entirely our fault!) – the vines got infected with Eutypa and we had to cut out a lot of diseased arms. We replanted around 50 vines. The yield dropped to 1.2 tons. We picked with friends, changed our wine-making processes somewhat and bottled in April 2013

2010 Picking & Crush

We picked the 2010 crop in late October with a larger group of friends. We sorted the bunches superficially and dropped them into the destemmer which in turn dropped the berries directly into the fermentation tank.

1 Sharon Armstrong & Maryann Scanlon

2 Kay LaPlain

3 Aran Healy & Paul Daniels

4 Donna

5 Paul Daniels & yours truly

6 Rosemarie Rossi
Pressing in November 2010

We pressed our second vintage in November of 2010

1 Yours truly, Aran Healy & Greg Martin
2 Aran Healy & Greg Martin
3 Opening the hatch to let the skins and seeds fall into press
4 Pressed juice is gravity fed into barrel below
First Racking in March 2011

Aran Healy and I racked the 2 barrels for the first time in March of 2011

1 Aran Healy emptying barrel into steel tank so the barrel can be cleaned
2 Aran Healy filling the barrel after it has been cleaned

Bottling in April 2013

David Fenyvesi and I mixed our two barrels in a new mixing tank and bottled them in April 2013

1 Overview from left to right: bottle filler, corker and foiler
2 David Fenyvesy filling a bottle
3 Yours truly corking a bottle

4 Yours truly putting a foil on the bottle

5 Prosit

Previous page: 2009 Vintage
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Next Page: 2011 Vintage
Last updated: January 4, 2016
2011 was our most challenging year to date. Our yield dropped again due to the continuing Eutypa infection and the quality of the grapes was below par due to poor weather conditions. We picked late, in early November and only 0.6 tons. We have no pictures from the harvest; only from the pressing in December 2011 and the bottling in March 2014.

**Pressing in December 2011**

We pressed in December with Brian Robins attending as a visitor.

1 Aran Healy runs the free-flow into the press while Brian Robins is watching

2 Yours truly opens the hatch of the fermentation tank to expose the skins and seeds

3 Aran Healy rakes the skins and seeds into the press below the fermentation tank

**Bottling in July 2014**

We mixed the 2011 cabernet sauvignon barrel with half of the 2012 Merlot barrel to give the wine more body and then we bottled it in July 2014
1 David Fenyvesi moving wine from barrel to mixing tank

2 Cleaning barrel on barrel washer

3 David Fenyvesi filling bottles & Claudia Guldimann corking them

4 Mission accomplished

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Next Page: 2012 Vintage
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2012 Vintage

The harvest on October 7, 1 ton, was small due to the continuing Eutypa problems, so we bought additional Merlot grapes (0.75 tons) from Barghetto. To improve on the grape quality, we added bunch sorting tables before destemming, we added a vibration table after the destemmer to sort the berries and we used a new fermentation tanks which could be heated or cooled to better control the fermentation.

Harvest 2012

We harvested with a crew of 13

1 Vineyard at dawn

2 Brian Robins picking

3 Byron Anderson picking

4 David Fryburger picking

5 Steve Rossi picking

6 Anne-Marie Hunyor picking
Lunch

As usual, Donna prepared a great lunch for all

Bunch sorting

We upped the game by inspecting every single bunch and eliminating damaged and unripe berries and other debris
**Destemming & berry sorting**

We used a new vibration table under the destemmer to sort the berries; i.e removing damaged berries and MOG (material other than berries) from what came out of the destemmer. The vibrating table also moves the berries into the new temperature controlled fermentation tank.
Pressing in December

We pressed in December moving the fermented must with a shute from the fermentation tank into the press

1 Donna unloading fermentation tank into press
2013 Vintage

The 2013 vintage was outstanding in grape quality but again small in volume (only 1.1 tons) due to continuing Eutypa problems. We spent more time on bunch and berry sorting to reduce contaminations and leverage the berry quality. This was the first year we measured phenolics during fermentation and cellaring.

Picking Grapes

We picked the grapes with a large crew of 16 in record time, about 90 minutes.

1 Ann-Marie Gauthier picking grapes
2 Brian Robins & Steve Lapinski
3 Matt Crosby
4 Michelle Crosby
5 Naveen & Jess Agarwal and Andy Martin
6 Roger Mairose in charge of transport
Bunch Sorting

We spent 2 hours sorting debris and mildewed berries out of the bunches. We used a new sorting table which however proved out to more of a bottleneck than an improvement.
Lunch

As usual, a great lunch prepared by Donna and the ladies as the rest sorted bunches

1 David Fryburger & Donna

2 Donna and Andy Martin

3 Lunch buffet

4 Michelle Crosby & Greg Martin
Destemming and berry sorting

We destemmed and sorted the berries after lunch

1 Brian Robins sorting and me spraying sulfur

2 Grape stems falling out of destemmer

3 Greg Martin

4 Rosemary Rossi & Andy Martin sorting
Saignee

For the first time we caught the juice dropping out on the vibration table with the intention to ferment it separately as rose. The experiment failed because the juice was too polluted.

1 Steve Rossi saigneeing from vibration table  
2 Steve Lapinski filtering saignee
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Next Page: 2014 Vintage
Last updated: January 4, 2016
2014 Vintage

2014 vintage was of average quality. We measured phenolics in the grapes before harvest for the first time and again during fermentation – the levels were 30% below 2013. Volume was also down to below 1 ton due the lingering Eutypa infections which had forced us to cut off more arms and pull out 60 vines. We harvested early October with a large crew of 18 including for the first time a dedicated photographer: Ken Ogle.

Cleanup

Before every harvest we need to thoroughly clean all equipment; this takes almost a day

1. Steam-cleaning the destemmer

2. Steam-cleaning the vibration table for berry sorting

3. Moving the destemmer to sit on top of the berry sorting table

4. Steam-cleaning the fermentation tank

Dawn before harvest
This is what the vineyard looked like in the morning before harvest

1 Night’s fog lifting

2 Nets are still on

3 Collection buckets in place

4 Grapes looking good

Picking grapes

We had a large crew of 18 so the picking did not take long

1 Getting to work

2 Stevie Rossi vying for the tractor job

3 Picking instructions

4 Andy & Greg Martin, David Fenyvesi and Matt Crosby
5 Jane Ogle in charge of transportation

6 Naveen & Jess Agarwal with Jai

7 Ken Ogle, the official photographer

8 Steve Rossi picking

9 Andy Martin through the leaves

10 Erika Fenyvesi picking

11 Second shift: Dominic Chan & Pearl Wong and Florian von Meiss & Jetti Guenthard

12 Ngoc & Steve Rossi with Greg Martin in the middle
Lunch

Lunch was prepared by Donna and Rosemary Rossi

1 Donna the host & cook

2 Rosemary Rossi, the other cook
3 Self service for Matt Crosby & Steve Rossi

4 Self service for Jane Ogle and Steve & Ngoc Rossi

5 Mostly beer drinkers here

6 A beer and wine table

7 Only wine at this table

8 Relaxing moment for Dominic Chan & Pearl Wong

9 A joke among the Swiss

10 Jess & Jai Agarwal time for a nap

11 Stevie & Steve Rossi - no nap here
Sorting Bunches

We sorted the bunches using new improved sorting grids

1 grape bunches to be sorted

2 Florian von Meiss & Jetti Guenthard and Pearl Wong under supervision

3 Dominic Chan, Susan & Dan Steele and Jane Ogle sorting

4 Andy Martin & Steve Rossi sorting

5 Bella and Tanya Beder sorting

6 Ken Ogle, the photographer, sorting
Destemming & berry sorting

A large part of the crew stayed on for destemming and berry sorting.

1 Florian von Meiss loads grape bunches into destemmer

2 Terry Carlitz monitors stems coming out of destemmer

3 Steve Rossi, Jane Ogle, Dominic Chan and Jetti Guenthard sorting berries

4 The entire destemming & berry sorting operation
Dinner

All good berries are in the fermentation tank - time to celebrate. You may wonder why we all needed hard liquor to unwind.

1 Steve Rossi toasting while Donna is mixing and Jetti Guenthard watching

2 Jane Ogle and Florian von Meiss in serious conversation

3 Donna and Jetti Guenthard feel the lubrication

4 Steve Rossi attacking the desert cheeses prematurely
Punchdown during fermentation

During fermentation the cap is punched down 2-3 times a day while the fan is running to air out escaping gases. (Oct. 23)

Early pressing of cap

David Fenyvesi is scooping out the cap (mostly berry skins) into a bucket which is then emptied into the press below (Oct 25). After the press is run, the juice is added back into the fermentation tank to complete fermentation while the pressed skins are distributed in the vineyard to augment the soil.

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Next Page: 2015 Vintage
Last updated: January 4, 2016
The 2015 vintage was of average quality and very low volume. Both were the result of first a bad fruit set in spring due to weather conditions, i.e. few berries per bunch (bad luck) and, second, mildew infection due to poorly timed preventative sprays in early summer (bad management). As a consequence we harvested only 1080 lbs of grape bunches. After sorting out mildew infected shrivelled grapes we ended up with only 840 lbs of grapes in the fermentation tank – barely enough for a single barrel of wine.

The harvest crew included old timers (Steve & Rosemary Rossi, Greg & Andy Martin, David & Erika Fenyvesi, Ken & Jane Ogle [our photographer], Matt & Michelle Crosby, Steve Rossi Jr & Stevie) and newcommers (Mike & Cheryl Chilcoat, Pete & Whitney St.Pierre, Bruce Grant & Matthew and Nicolas Vonderheyden)

### Picking grapes

We started at 9 am and finished at 12:30 pm. For each vine we used a dedicated bucket so we could keep track of yield per vine as well as the 3 different clone/rootstock combinations (blue, white & red buckets)
5 Picking - Bruce & Matthew

6 Shrivelled grapes

7 Good grapes

8 Picking – Steve Jr. & Stevie

9 Picking - Nicolas

10 Picking break - Pete & Kija

11 Grape transport - Jane

12 Recording harvest yield - me
Lunch

Lunch, as usual, prepared by Donna with invaluable assistance from Rosemary

1 Lunch buffet style - Steve, Jane & Donna
2 Lunch table - Andy, Matt, Steve, Pete, Jane & Matthew
3 Lunch table - Greg, Bruce, Nicolas, me Donna, Erika, Steve Jr & Rosemary
4 Lunch – both tables
Sorting bunches, destemming and berry sorting

Due to popular demand we arranged for chairs, so the heavy sorting could be done sitting down. The low yield permitted fermenting each grape clone in its own bucket inside the fermentation tank. The whole process took 4 hours, from 3 to 7 pm.

1 Bunch sorting - Nicolas, Greg, me David, Rosemary, Andy, Steve & Jane
2 Putting fermentation buckets into tank - David, Steve, me, Andy & Jane
3 Loading bunches into destemmer - Greg
4 Berry sorting - Andy & Jane
5 Full operation - David, Steve, Greg, Andy & me
Dinner

Dinner, again prepared by Donna & Rosemary was served for the hardy who lasted the whole day.

1 Dinner preparation - Rosemary

2 Dinner preparation - Donna & Rosemary

3 Pre dinner drinks - Steve, Nicolas, me & David

4 Dinner - Nicolas & Andy