

# 17th Annual Varietal Seminar

## “Napa Valley Appellations and their Cabernet Varieties”

*Saturday, August 11 at Silverado Resort*

The seminar wines tasted are in bold following the names of their providers.

Moderator Bob Pecota first came to Napa Valley in the 1970's when Nestlé asked him to take a look around its newly acquired Beringer Brothers Winery. Bob had been a coffee buyer for Hills Brothers and become a wine nut. He came to the Valley in mid-October when, he said, “the aromas were just unbelievable: pomace spread in the fields, fermentation—it was absolutely delicious.” He went to work full-time for Beringer in 1971 and by 1978 had his own winery, which he sold in 2006. Now, he is into new wine, new vines and a “new” career in the Valley.



*Bob Pecota*

Bob calls the moderate, Mediterranean climate of Napa Valley ideal for growing vinifera grapes with its

average daily temperature swing of 59° to 85°. Bob noted that the intricacies of today become tomorrow's geology, from San Pablo Bay to the Pacific.

Bob said that in 1961 the founders of the Napa Valley Wine Library wished to enrich their lives through a knowledge and use of wine. Today, he concurs with the founders that a moderate use of wine can add to our demeanor and physical well-being. He also noted there were about 17 members in the Napa Valley Vintners Association when he first came to the Valley. With a shake of his head Bob said there are now 285 members and a staff of twenty. He then introduced the four panelists for:

### “In the Vineyard.”

#### Sloan Upton

Owner and Grower

Three Palms Vineyard, Calistoga

• **Duckhorn Vineyards 2004**

**Napa Valley Merlot Three Palms Vineyard**

Sloan and his brother, John, farm an outpouring of rocks from Dutch Henry Canyon in Calistoga. Before they bought the property it was in rattlesnakes and cows. Although by his own admission, Sloan and his brother were city boys, Sloan said they knew the French vineyard model. Three Palms was originally planted to Chenin Blanc. Sloan said in listening to

the very gentle voice of the vineyard he has learned it does not like to grow certain wine grapes. The Chenin Blanc was pulled and the vineyard next planted to the five Bordelaise varieties. Today, Three Palms produces Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot.

The soil is igneous depositional volcanic. The rocks provide a marvelous gentle heat that can lead to harvests as early as July. In the spring, the rocks are particularly effective in managing heat at night. The vineyard is generally 2° warmer than neighbors'. For frost protection Three Palms relies on rosary beads and wind machines. All cultivation is by hand. Sloan said they tried rotary, disc and hoe ploughs, but they were all “no go.” Besides shovels they use herbicides, sparingly.

Sloan has thoroughly explored the soil profile at Three Palms (and picked up all sorts of curious things along the way). Vine roots reach down at least eighteen feet and he has driven bits past five hundred feet five times, only to find either no water or four gallons per minute and boron. Sloan feels that the conditions peculiar to Three Palms, its stones and other contents, lack of water, gentle heat and style of cultivation contribute to a distinct flavor in the fruit.

Q&A: Irrigation? Three Palms drip irrigates young vines only. Vine roots have

a distinct profile, nothing like an onion or a carrot. The youngest vines were planted in 1993. Before harvest, fruit is dropped three times. Four tons an acre is the average yield; with uneven ripening, it might be three.

## Mike Wolf

Vineyard Manager  
Michael Wolf Vineyard Services,  
Yountville

- Cakebread Cellars 2003 Oakville Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon Vine Hill Ranch

Mike manages 750 acres of vineyard in Napa County. He chooses a farming system appropriate to each property. The systems change as he works his way through the Valley, from Carneros to Calistoga. Mike finds the differences from north to south to be more political or of temperature degrees, while those between east and west are more soil-related. He thinks soil is far more relevant (and interesting). Oakville is as extreme as anywhere in the Valley, Napa more uniform. Oakville and Rutherford are very different visually. On the east the hills have a background of brush and red, rocky dirt; on the west it's forest. The west shows the effects of morning sun and the east a higher heat from afternoon sun.

Appellation is really about soil. Vineyard redevelopment necessitated by phylloxera was an opportunity to move forward. It

was expensive, yes, but it meant the chance to redesign vineyards in terms of soil, which meant twenty-five year decisions. Vine Hill Ranch is north of Oakville on the west side. Soil is low clay with coarse gravel, a gravelly loam. Vines there are both comfortable and challenged. They are not overly stressed, but they are not overly luxurious either. Mike thinks wine



*L to R: Sloan Upton, Mike Wolf, Bob Pecota, Doug Hill, Randall Johnson*

quality is best able to express the site and that you needn't overly manipulate a vineyard. It can be cared for naturally with tools such as row orientation, rootstock and trellising. All the rest is tweaking, whether it's pH manipulation or adding organic matter.

Vine Hill is planted in two different vineyard blocks. The lower part of the bench is clone 4 on IO1-14 rootstock, planted 6' by 8' on a modified vertical trellis. There is little irrigation and the vines rarely need trimming. Mike has been caring for this block for ten years. Weed control is mechanical—no herbicides. He uses some sulfur and horticultural oils.

The vines bear three and half to four tons an acre. Further up the bench in more challenging soil the vines are clone 7 on 039-16, which is a thirsty rootstock, planted 6' by 10' with a divided foliage canopy that makes a nice umbrella. These vines require more irrigation and bear only three to three and a half tons an acre. Cakebread is actively involved in keeping

the vines comfortable in this block which is picked later than the lower block.

Q&A: Appellation limits? Appellations right now seem to have boundaries because of politics rather than soil. Maybe this is to avoid confusion for most consumers because, based on soil, Oakville has at least three distinct regions.

Vine spacing? If you increase rows for a denser vineyard, you get more yield on smaller vines. But, if you increase vine space, the yield is the same. Quality is really driven by different philosophies. There is a "small-vine" philosophy of life. Mike is not a small-vine man. He plants

what is efficient and effective in vineyards that are each designed differently.

## Doug Hill

Winemaker

Hill Family Estate, Napa

• **Hill Family Estate 2004**

**Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon**

The first Hill Family vintage was in 1972. The Hill Family Estate 2004 Cabernet is 65% Cabernet from Oak Knoll District (OKD) and 30% from Soda Canyon. OKD changes west to east and the terroir differs vineyard block to vineyard block. Bordeaux varieties can have vegetative, herbal flavors. Doug says the challenge is to bring out their fruit flavors. Stomates in grapevine leaves shut in wind above seven miles an hour, intensifying the green flavors which is why Bordeaux varieties, except for Sauvignon Blanc, are hard to grow in places such as Salinas. The Hill Family wine derives more structure from its mountain vineyards and a cedary flavor. The west side is sagey. OKD vines yield a good dark fruit with plush character and a very soft finish. The fruit is picked when seeds are brown and astringency has mellowed in the skins.

Doug likes to manage growth so that as harvest approaches, October or even November in OKD, canes are just little finger-sized. He prefers a site with not

much water-holding capacity. In OKD on the knolls there may be one inch of soil and as much as three inches on the flat. However, all the little alluvial streams change the soil on the flat frequently. Doug uses two different drip irrigation systems to slow vine growth and keep shoots small. He manages shoot length to allow sunlight to reach the leaves and canopy so sun reaches the clusters. Rows are planted on a north-south axis. On the west side, with a two or three o'clock sun canopy, ripening clusters in the sun can still be green. Doug uses water management to control growth and likes to wait late to pick. The estate vines are about seven years old. Rather than going by a formula of, say, two inches of water for one foot of soil, Doug goes by rootstock, trellising, cover crop competition and the time of year. It is breezier in October, the days are shorter days and nights are really cool. For harvest, you have to get it there and you have to get it right.

Q&A: Farming vs. appellation? The right farming tools make vines comfortable yet challenged in their environment. Rather than a round peg in any-sized hole, it is important to be respectful and conscious of what's being farmed where: of the terroir and what's inherent in the vine. The effect of water in OKD is the same as anywhere, like chemistry, nutrients or pH. Soil is the most important factor. It is true that certain acid conditions at cer-

tain times make it difficult for vines to pick up phosphorus, and phosphorus is so important for ripening. But, in the first foot of topsoil there must be beneficial fungi, especially microrhizomes that are like soda straws and allow vine roots to draw up the terroir.

## Randle Johnson

Vice President of Winemaking and

Strategic Planning

Hess Collection, Napa

• **Hess Collection 2004**

**Mount Veeder Napa Valley**

**Estate Grown Cabernet Sauvignon**

The 2004 Hess Mount Veeder Estate Cabernet Sauvignon is made with Malbec and Petit Verdot in addition to Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Randle says Hess loves Malbec for its plush, soft, round and fattening qualities. He says it is making a comeback in Bordeaux. Malbec has poor set but with the addition of zinc and shoots tipped at flowering, fruit set can be improved. Petit Verdot ripens late in the season, later than Cabernet Franc. It adds a perfumey, flower tone and round tannin profile to the wine mitigating the Cabernet Franc-Cabernet Sauvignon profile. The parents of Cabernet Sauvignon were Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc. Both are vigorous vines producing fruit with herbal tendencies. Randle says the child is like its parents and requires management.

Hess grows Chardonnay, Syrah and the five red Bordelaise varieties on Mount Veeder. Randle says its Chardonnay is Chablis-like. While uniformity is the goal, it is very difficult to achieve. Hess may need to harvest the same block two to three times for a unity of flavor. The flavors of terroir come from the soil and the environment. In mountain vineyards forestry aromas get into the grapes for a briary, brambly taste. And then there's the marine layer. Mountain sites above the fog line at 1000' are warmer at night than on the Valley floor. Hess relies on lots of weather stations to calculate degree-days at different elevations.

Mount Veeder was once an active volcano and above one thousand feet the soil is Sonoma volcanics. Today, Hess produces wines blended from its upper ranch apart from the wines from its more uniform lower vineyards. There are 375 acres of hillside vineyard, 70 acres at 1,700'. New technology from oil and gas exploration has shown the soil profile to be huge. Using 15' rods and magnetic pulses broadcast on TV you can actually see to 12' below the surface. Randle says all the upper ranch vineyard blocks are to be redeveloped as a result of new technology. Rows will be squiggly lines, following the irregular geology. Rootstocks will be matched with the new zone rows.

Randle says soil takes away or mitigates

rootstock vigor. Mount Veeder soil is red loam, interlaced with a network of drain lines four feet deep connecting to several lined reservoirs. Hess has found moisture at four feet in the hills where the grapevine roots are twenty-two feet long. In fact, there is a history of too much water so shallower-rooted rootstocks have been used—420-A or IOI-14. Randle says Napa Valley soils are moist, fostering early growth. Hess likes 36" to 42" shoots with short internodes, which it gets by stopping the growing tips. It uses two drip lines, a technique cheap and handy for controlling moisture and nutrition. A second drip line makes foliar applications of trace elements such as zinc for the Malbec, or molybdenum very easy.

According to Randle, André Tchelistcheff loved Cabernet Sauvignon #5197. Clone 6 is also popular. And now there is a whole new host of clones from France. Only one individual in California is licensed by the French to distribute these clones, and the French must first approve the site where a clone will be grown, to be sure it is away from any viruses. The site is then inspected once or twice a year. Randle said of the six Cabernet Franc clones offered by the French, three were infected with virus. Infection was masked by vigor, but revealed when vines were distressed. Although the French withdrew the three clones, the most popular and widely planted was one of the three.

Grafting and propagation spread virus, as well as vine mealy bug, which can spread leaf-roll virus. So, there are more problems than just Pierce's Disease and Phylloxera. Q&A: Soil amendments? The addition to the soil of microrhizomes is huge.

After a brief intermission, the seminar resumed with Bob Pecota introducing the panelists for the second session:

### **"In the Cellar"**

#### **Bob Levy**

Winemaker

Harlan and Bond Estates, Oakville

• **Matriarch 2003 Napa Valley**

Matriarch is part of the Bond Estates program developed by Bill Harlan and Bob out of their experience with Merryvale where they worked with sixty



*Bob Levy*

growers. Fruit from a certain number of properties gave a distinct expression year in and year out, irrespective of vines and viticulture. Bill wanted to select those he thought would become the grand cru vineyards of Napa Valley and start a new program, Bond Estates. He and Bob chose six geographically distinct areas from a few hillside properties. They would make six wines using the same cultural practices as at Harlan estate for wine of the highest quality possible. An agreement was crafted to compensate the grower commensurate with bottle price, so there would be complete alignment long-term. Bob observed that terroir has taken a long time to be embraced in the US, and that pitting grower versus vintner goes nowhere.

Matriarch is a blend of the six sites in the Bond portfolio. These are three vineyards in Oakville, one on Spring Mountain, one in Spring Valley and one in Conn Valley. The Oakville sites at Vecina on the west side yield wines of wild character, big structure and forest body. Pluribus on Spring Mountain has challenging tannins; its soil is deep and its westerling location fosters aromatic qualities: herbaceous, of petroleum--asphalt. In Conn Valley, Melbury is simpler, elegant, silky. St. Eden in Spring Valley is a young vineyard, still coming into its own. Bob says vinification practices match terroir, that the character of wine is derived from terroir, and that terroir is multi-faceted. It consists of

agriculture, soil, people, rootstock and climate—the dirt and people involved, the decisions made. The winemaking style for Matriarch is the same as it is for Harlan, The Maiden, Bond, and The Reserve. Bob says you need to go by a year to year and parts of blocks to parts of blocks basis of growth habit, crop level, cluster size and crop maturity in order to achieve a uniformity in the wine. The vinification selection processes dictate success in each lot and each lot is from a block with different variables. However, when several blocks are of optimum maturity and quality they are co-fermented.

Temperature, fermentation, time on skin, pumpovers—how long, how often--all contribute to a certain cadence in wine-making. 2003 was a challenging tannin year, one of fairly ripe wines in the black fruit realm mid- palate. Bob says the degree of success with a wine comes from maturing the fruit so its tannins are soft, supple.

Q&A: Does late harvesting attenuate the effect of terroir? Not at all. There is a concentration of flavors, of suppleness, a better expression of terroir. You want the energies within the plant to focus flavors. Vines want to produce a lot of fruit in their teenage years, but have immature root systems. This makes young vines more challenging because you have greater fluctuations with degree and sugar concentrations

## Pam Starr

Winemaker

Crocker & Starr, St. Helena

• Crocker & Starr 2003

Napa Valley Stone Place

Pam started her career with Bill Bonetti in Sonoma. Bill gave her an awareness of the taste of dirt through tasting, one after another, wines from a single vineyard. In the 1990's Pam was winemaker at Spottswode during a vineyard replant brought on by Phylloxera. In an exploration of ideas on how to get it right in



Pam Starr

the vineyard, Pam recalled her earlier experiences with Bill in the 1970's and 1980's and the single vineyard concept. Atlas Peak, Los Carneros, Oakville, Howell Mountain; Pam has experienced extracting their soils through consulting and making wine for others. For the replant at Spottswode, experts were

called in from France and New Zealand and they reviewed the soil, rootstocks, clonal heritage, and character of the vineyard.

Charlie Crocker wished to pursue the estate concept in his vineyards on Dowdell Lane in St. Helena, where the land has been in vineyard for 135 years. A stone winery alongside the vineyards was built in 1870 for Dowdell and Foss. There, Pam joined Charlie to found Crocker & Starr, pairing her knowledge as a winemaker with Charlie's desire to produce estate wines. Pam says she has grown both as a winemaker and a winegrower.

Because soil is diverse, Pam counsels that what you put into it should be diverse and what you take out of it should be diversity with a theme. St. Helena is at the pinch of the Valley, where the Valley takes a hard left as Spring Mountain spills out and the Mayacamas goes up. A diversity of soils comes from this nook, warm with a load of minerals from alluvial washes, bounded by the Napa River on the east and south. The nook is well-drained with longer-ripening soils that are sandy, crumbly, to round stones. Around Spring Mountain the nook has clay components and slightly earlier ripening.

The 25 year-old Crocker vines exhibit many years of sustainable vineyard experience coupled with recent innovations

in grape growing technology. The vines used to produce ten tons an acre. Now they are really sucking up the soil producing less. One four-acre block has three different soil profiles. At harvest, from four to as many as seven different pickings are captured by varying fermentation techniques. Yet work within the winery is predictable if everything was done in the vineyard. Old World "minerality" translates to rocks and acid. Clayey blocks are harvested last. Pam says she makes a layered, diverse wine by capturing and vinifying as a "soil translator" for cassis, black berries, black chocolate. The Crocker vineyard has sexy fruit. The ripe vibrancy from its naturally acidic soil brings longevity on the palate. Reflective light coming off rock gives warmth and ripeness from the ground as well as protection. The vines are in a cheerleader V, so vines make shade in a teepee effect. Ripeness is from balanced vines. The ripe berries have diversity in ripeness of seed and skin. Careful extraction yields wines that are soft and supple but with power.

### **Bill Dyer**

Owner and Winemaker  
Dyer Vineyards, Calistoga

• **Dyer 2004 Diamond Mountain District Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon**

Bill spent twenty years working at Sterling Vineyards and his wife, Dawnine, spent twenty-five at Domaine Chandon. Bill left

Sterling in 1996 and Dawnine retired from Chandon in 2001. Together, they have been making Dyer for eleven years. Bill says it is still all about tannins and he's still hooked on phenolics.

Bill habitually checks two windmills driving south in the Valley: the one in Flynnville near Calistoga points NW when the one at Nickel and Nickel in Oakville points to the Bay. It is a more complex climate than in 1974 when the grapes just got to a certain point and you picked 'em. This is over-simplified, but the climate is from the Bay (cool) to Calistoga (warm). An onshore airflow is the most common marine influence from the west and northwest and from the Bay up through the Knights Valley and other gaps, especially the Petaluma gap, bringing fog and wind.

This August, Ritchie Creek on Spring Mountain was flowing yet Diamond Mountain Creek was dry. Diamond Mountain is volcanic. Several inches of rain in the night are gone by the morning. Its soils have great drainage; there is no sedimentary soil as there is on Spring Mountain. Diamond Mountain became an AVA in 2001. It is one of the smaller AVA's, with 5000 acres, 450 in vineyard. It is quite steep and there are restrictions on clearing timber. It is 40 miles from the Bay, 40 miles east from the Pacific, 40 degrees is typical from the coast to Diamond Mountain, 40 degrees from

night to day, and 4 degrees difference from the Valley floor up to Dyer. In the 1860's Diamond Mountain was in grapes. The Adele Ernest Winery dates from 1885 (the date is on the bridge). It was called "diamond" because it sparkled with volcanic material, possibly from a Mount Konocti eruption-- Mount Konocti is 40 miles north of Diamond Mountain.



Bill Dyer

Bills says while he was at Sterling he realized he and his wife at Chandon were making 11% of the tonnage of Napa Valley into wine. Bill and Dawnine now consult for others as well as making their own wine. Dyer Vineyard was planted in 1993 and 1996 was the first Dyer vintage. They had had to mine rocks to move a tree. Larger wineries are all about blending. Dyer used to aspire to five tons to the acre. Now they aim for not quite three in order to get even ripening among all the

varieties, such as the Petit Verdot that gets the afternoon sun. Cabernet Franc is first in ripening.

Dyer is organically farmed--with a weed-whacker! After picking, lots are co-fermented across the way at Von Strasser. The pre-release 2004 poured today was made from the ripest fruit Dyer has ever picked: 24.6° Brix. There is a pattern of under-ripe, herbaceous flavors at lower °Brix, especially with Cabernet. Then there is a zone that gives you character of place, prune-y, raisin-y. South-facing vineyard is picked earlier and at a higher °Brix. At Dyer they rely on skin and brown seed phenolics for supple tannin and pick in a range of high 23° to low 24°Brix for 13 to 14.6% alcohol. The 2004 has the flavor of black fruit, maybe cherry, and of chocolate and fennel. Diamond Creek Terrace is on the same geological band as Dyer, what Bill and Dawnine call the "filet" of Diamond Mountain. There is a temperature inversion at this altitude, with warmer nights and cooler days.

### Kristof Anderson

Winemaker

Gargiulo Vineyards, Oakville

- **Gargiulo Vineyards 2004 Oakville Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon Money Road Ranch**

Kristof began his presentation with gusto by recommending *The Winemaker's Dance*. It is such a readable reference work he thinks everyone should have a copy. After UC Davis, Kristof's first vintage was at Pine Ridge in 1992. Next, he analyzed wines from different AVAs at ETS Laboratories for three vintages. This was during an explosion of new brands, custom crush operations and the Napa Wine Company. After ETS Kristof worked with Nils Venge at Saddleback for five years, where he took part in lots of different projects in the vineyard--Kristof thinks a wine-maker is really a closet vineyard manager. A stint at Lewis Cellars came next, where Kristof was winemaker and learned how to work with winegrowers.

While at ETS and Saddleback during what Kristof calls "pioneer days," high alcohols and high ripeness were coming into fashion. Kristof became aware of various winemaking issues associated with this trend. Increased ripeness creates a set of particular problems. Although the winemaker wants more ripeness (which yields more alcohol), yeast and bacteria are more comfortable in upper degrees Brix. However, the winemaker believes every year is going to be better than the year before.

Kristof came to Gargiulo in 2001. Gargiulo is in the heart of Oakville. There are three different soils in its Money Road



*Kristof Anderson*

vineyard. The west is alluvial, the middle a mix with ocean influences, and the east is red volcanic. In 2003 Gargiulo changed from a bilateral cordon to quadrilateral. It is the same fruit, but with more sun and is more in balance. Now the vineyards are pushing ripeness. The fruit is blueberry, cassis.

As to the AVA system and its role in providing consumer information, only five percent of the US public actually drinks wine. Kristof thinks the future is in wines with vineyard designates and the styles of the wine, soil, winemaker, and ownership are all part of it. He predicts political confusion ahead as labels are marked Napa County versus Napa Valley, 75 versus 85. [75 percent of the fruit must be from a designated state or county and 85 percent from a designated AVA.]

## Jim Barrett Luncheon Speaker

The seminar then broke for lunch on the terrace at Silverado. Several more wines in addition to those from the seminar were poured, and lunch served. At dessert, Bob Pecota introduced his neighbor-for-true in Calistoga, Jim Barrett of Chateau Montelena. Jim spoke about his various experiences with wine in the Valley and with film, including “Bottle Shock,” in which he thinks he may appear for just a second. Jim had started out as a lawyer, which increasingly was all about frowns. He became involved with the Napa Valley in 1969; the first crush at Chateau Montelena was in 1972 (crap grapes but a great location). As Jim told friends his Napa Valley anecdotes, he found it was all about smiles, so he quit his day job and went to work full-time at the winery. The Trefethens, Traverses, and Mondavis were in the Valley. Maynard Amerine brought Jim as a guest to a meeting of the Napa Valley Vintners when there were just 23 wineries. What could be better?

Jim agreed with Bob Levy’s description of terroir: a combination of land and the hand of man. It is site specific, and the people. Chateau Montelena was founded in 1882 by Alfred Tubbs, a true visionary. Jim doesn’t like “terroir” unless you know what “the land” means. At Montelena they used to pick 100 acres back to front.

Jerry Cuter was the winemaker and Jim would say to him, “Jerry, these grapes taste differently from those over there.” Now they make seven different wines from seven blocks, vinified in who knows how many ways because of so many different “things,” things like physiological maturity. The maximum potential of a wine is derived from a combination of artistry and technological capacity.

Jim believes the future for wine is bright. Somewhat tearily he said it depends on



*Jim Barrett*

land, the hand of man and a passionate dedication. Bob asked Jim to mention the Calistoga appellation. This pending AVA has been hung up for four years and Jim didn’t think anything more needed to be said. However he did say he thought the current direction for wine is site specific vineyards.

After lunch, Bob introduced the presenters for the final session,

## “In the Library,”

a vertical blind tasting of wines from two wineries, one in a northern and the other in a southern appellation.

### Chris Howell

General Manager and Winemaker  
Cain Vineyards, St. Helena

- Cain Five 1998 Napa Valley
- Cain Five 2001 Napa Valley
- Cain Five 2003 Napa Valley

### John Clews

Vice President of Vineyard and  
Winery Operations  
Clos du Val, Napa

- Clos du Val 1998 Stags Leap District Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
- Clos du Val 2001 Stags Leap District Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
- Clos du Val 2003 Stags Leap District Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

Two wines from two wineries and the same three vintages were blind tasted. Ultimately, everyone agreed there were too many variables for this particular tasting to be a complete success. However, it was a valuable exercise. The color of the wines from the oldest vintage shared an orangey cast; otherwise, it was very difficult for participants to identify the wines. They all

had familiar flavors. However, John Clews noted that the woods were different. Cain uses 50 percent new and 50 percent old oak; Clos du Val uses two-thirds to three-quarters new to old oak.

John has been with Clos du Val since 1999. Clos du Val is at the bottom end of Stags Leap, the cool (herbal) end of Cabernet. Macerations are long. There is freshness in the nose and flavor in the mouth. Clos du Val racks its Cabernet four times the first year and two to three times the next. These are very soft wines with silky tannins. The farther north, the more powerful the tannins; southern wines have silkier tannins, an ability to age.

Chris Howell moved to Napa Valley in 1986. His first harvest was at Clos du Val. In 1990 he came to Cain. (Over the years that he has been coming to Wine Library seminars there have been many presenters who have all taught him things, and again today.) Spring Mountain is highly diverse. Cain is also diverse but more distinctive. Spring Mountain is cool, Pacific; soils are thin, sedimentary, very little volcanic. Vineyards have low yields. For Chris the challenge is keeping tannins under control: Cain Five is more about site than style.

1998 was very cold and late. The 2001's were youthful, still a bit shut down. The Stags Leap style is soft, silky, smooth with

freshness. On Spring Mountain every year is a bit different but forest-y. Aging wine ten years is not the issue--five, ten, even fifteen years (the tradition of aging wines twenty to forty years may be passed). It's the change in style. Chris says there has been more change in wines made between 1990 and 1997. John observed pH has gone up, a definite change from softer wines of 3.7 on the lees. The public no longer holds wines as long. John concluded with, “Please the people early on, when most of the wine is drunk.”