

Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

February 2003

Ontario Wine Society Events

• Sauvignon Blancs of the World, February 18, 2003

This was to be a "Rieslings of the World" tasting. Since the October 2002 event was a tasting of Rieslings from the CCOVI library, the theme for this event has been changed to Sauvignon Blanc. Some of the finer Ontario Sauvignon Blancs will be compared to others from around the world.

- Canadian Wine Awards, March 18, 2003
- Annual Dinner, April 2003
- Fine Wine and Fine Glasses, May 2003
- Ontario Wine Awards, June 2003

Recent OWS Tastings

❖ A Taste of Vincor

By Bob Moore

On Tuesday, November 19, 2002, the Ontario Club was the venue for a presentation of the best wines from all of the Vincor properties including Inniskillin, Hawthorne Mountain, Jackson-Triggs, Sumac Ridge and Nk' Mip from the Okanagan, Inniskillin and Jackson-Triggs from Niagara, R. H. Phillips from California, Hogue Cellars from Washington and even one from their recently purchased winery in Western Australia - Goundrey.

This was a joint tasting with the Toronto Vintners Club, with 125 from the clubs attending the evening event with ample opportunity to talk with many of the winemakers and winery representatives. It was preceded by both media and trade events.

The tasting provided a real appreciation of the quality of the wines as well as an understanding of the breadth of scope of Vincor. Fifty-four wines were available to taste. Arrangements for this very successful event were made by Sadie Darby.

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In this Issue page

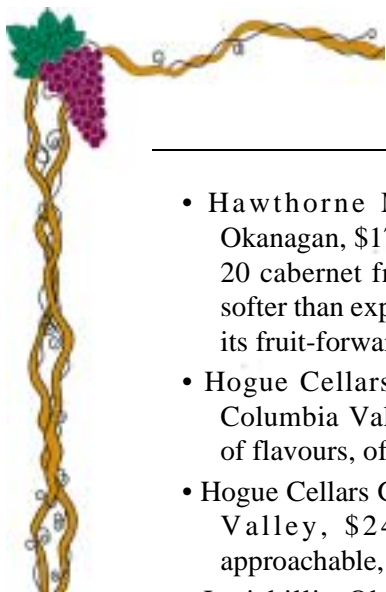
<i>Ontario Wine Society Events</i>	1
<i>Recent OWS Tastings</i>	1
A Taste of Vincor	1
<i>Ontario Winery Events</i>	2
Angels Gate	2
Cave Spring	2
Chateau des Charmes	3
Cuvée 2003 Gala Evening	3
Hillebrand/Peller	3
Inniskillin	3
Konzelmann	4
Pillitteri	4
Santé: The Bloor-Yorkville Wine Festival	4
Stonechurch	4
Strewn	5
Vineland	5
<i>Ontario Wine Industry News</i>	5
Winerytohome Connects Wine Lovers with Ontario's Best	5
<i>Feature Article</i>	6
Have You Heard About...Prince Edward County?	6

Taste of Vincor Tasting Notes

By Dean Tudor

At the walk around, I thought these wines stood out:

- Hawthorne Mountain Gewurztraminer 2001 Okanagan, \$13.40: good intensity and lovely flavours, well-rounded, no bitter aftertaste.



Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

February 2003

- Hawthorne Mountain Meritage 2000 Okanagan, \$17.95: 60% cabernet sauvignon, 20 cabernet franc, 20 merlot, and all good, softer than expected but approachable now in its fruit-forwardness.
- Hogue Cellars Genesis Chardonnay 2000 Columbia Valley, \$24.95: good integration of flavours, off-dry on palate.
- Hogue Cellars Genesis Merlot 1999 Columbia Valley, \$24.95: soft, forward, and approachable, great for restaurants.
- Inniskillin Okanagan Meritage 2000 Dark Horse, \$19.95: I thought that this was the best wine in the room, for value, beginning with the fruity nose and closing out with some soft oak tones and vanilla on the finish.
- Inniskillin Riesling Reserve 1999 Niagara, \$12.95: hard to go wrong at this price level, and the wine is aging very well. Good intense flavours.
- Inniskillin Founders' Reserve Chardonnay 1999 Niagara, \$29.95: a fine example of excellence in oak.
- Jackson-Triggs Okanagan Shiraz 2000 PR, \$16.95: softly approachable, Oz-like fruit and wood tones, great value at this price.
- Nk'Mip Cellars Merlot 2000 Okanagan, \$16.95: peppery, fruity, and off-dry.
- R.H. Phillips Kempton Clark Petite Sirah 2000 Denuding Hills, \$16.95: very oaky, possibly masking any stemminess from the young vines. But still a serious wine for contemplation, long finish.
- R.H. Phillips Toasted Head Chardonnay 2001 Dunnigan Hills, \$21.95: another fine value chardonnay from California, expressive of balanced oak.

Dean Tudor, Wine Writer and Professor Emeritus of Journalism, Ryerson University, Toronto
<www.ryerson.ca/~dtudor>

Ontario Winery Events

❖ **Angels Gate**

Hosting the Perfect Wine Party

Saturday, February 1, 1:00pm to 2:30pm.

Do you enjoy entertaining? Join us and we will help you plan a party that will have all your friends talking. Everything you ever wanted to know about hosting a home wine party. Topics include: the ABCs of wine tasting, shopping lists, types of tastings, where to get the best wine, what questions to ask, food & wine pairing, tools of the trade, and more. Featuring three premium Angels Gate Wines.

Tickets \$12.00 per person, taxes included. Limited seating. To call or e-mail, see below.

The Mystery of Decanting and Glassware Saturday, February 15, 1:00pm to 2:30pm.

Everything you ever wanted to know about decanting and glassware. Topics include how to decant, when to decant, what glass to use, how to care for your glassware, the effects of your glassware on fine wine. Come and taste the difference for yourself. Featuring three premium Angels Gate Wines.

Tickets \$15.00 per person, taxes included. Limited seating. To call or e-mail, see below.

Build the Perfect Cellar

Saturday, February 22, 1:00pm to 3:00pm

Looking for the perfect place to let your fine wine rest. Join us and we will provide you with tips on how to cellar your favourite selections. Topics include how to build a cellar on any budget, what wines will cellar, what are the technical requirements for a good cellar, stocking list, and how to manage your cellar. Featuring two premium cellar candidates.

Tickets \$12.00 per person, taxes included. Limited seating. Contact 905 563 3942 or mail@angelsgatewinery.com.

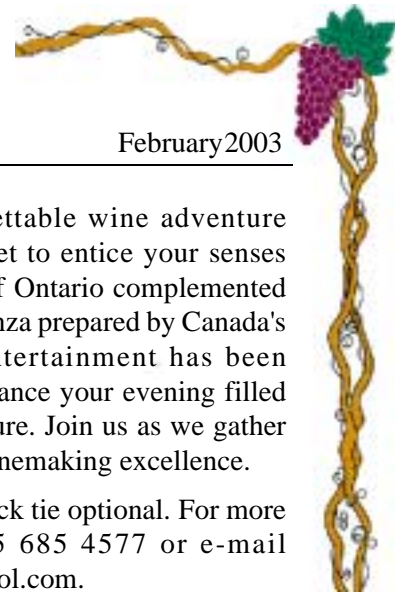
❖ **Cave Spring**

Seeing Red

February 1, 8, 15 and 22, 2:00pm.

2000, one of our coolest vintages in recent memory, produced some excellent red wines. How so? Find out how a cool summer and a warm autumn can add up to some red-hot reds!

\$5.00 per person. Reservations required. 905 562 3581 Ext. 302.



❖ Chateau des Charmes

Bouquets 2003, A Celebration of Wine And Roses

February 7, 7:30pm.

Join us at Chateau des Charmes Winery for an elegant evening of wine and food set amidst the beauty of lush roses. Place your bid for items in silent and live auctions for uniquely Niagara items and Rose Bouquets. All proceeds to support the new Niagara College Hospitality Program.

\$125.00. Tickets may be purchased by calling Marina Palombo at 905 468 1362 Ext. 8494.

Days of Wine and Roses

Daily in February, 11 am - 5 pm.

Château des Charmes is pleased to present the rose "Red France" with our 2000 Pinot Noir.

No charge. Reservations not required.

Aphrodisiac Temptations

Saturday, February 15, 1:00pm.

Stimulate your palate this Valentine's Day with foods long celebrated for their amorous nature. A tasting presented by Chef Erik Peacock of Wellington Court Restaurant will be paired with the wines of Château des Charmes. Arouse your appetite with these aphrodisiac temptations!

\$25 per person. Reservations required.

For Lovers of Wine and Chocolate

Saturday, February 22, 2:00pm.

Indulge yourself in the world of fine wine and decadent chocolate! Château des Charmes is pleased to present a tasting of wines thoughtfully paired with the chocolates of Bernard Callebaut. An experience not to be missed by lovers of wine and chocolate!

\$25 per person. Reservations required.

❖ Cuvée 2003 Gala Evening

Friday, February 28, 7:30pm to 11:00pm, White Oaks Resort, Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Amid the grandeur of a world-class resort is an evening of majesty waiting to unfold - an evening created just for you. As night falls, your

sojourn to an unforgettable wine adventure begins. The mood is set to entice your senses with the finest wines of Ontario complemented by a culinary extravaganza prepared by Canada's best chefs. Grand entertainment has been provided to further enhance your evening filled with magic and adventure. Join us as we gather together to celebrate winemaking excellence.

\$175.00 per person, black tie optional. For more information call 905 685 4577 or e-mail office@greygableschool.com.

❖ Hillebrand/Peller

Days of Wine and Roses

Weekends in February, 11:00am to 5:00pm.

Board the WineCountry Shuttle and visit Hillebrand Estates Winery, Peller Estates Winery and the WineCountry Vintners Store. Tickets include complimentary tours, a red wine tasting at each property, Icewine chocolates and a donation to the Heart & Stroke Foundation.

Tickets are \$10.00, available upon boarding at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce on Queen Street.

Hillebrand's Vineyard Café will feature a selection of chocolate inspired desserts on their lunch and dinner menus, and guests will receive dessert recipes to take home.

Peller Estates Winery Restaurants offers a "Temptation Tasting Menu" for lunch and dinner featuring items known throughout history to promote romance.

For dining reservations, please contact Hillebrand Estates at 905 468 7123 or Peller Estates at 905 468 4678.

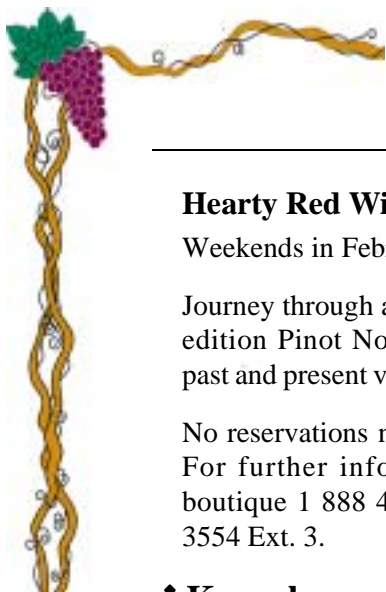
❖ Inniskillin

Wine and Roses Aroma Bar

Daily from February 2 to 23, 11:00am to 4:00pm.

Featuring a journey through the Aromas of Wine and Roses. You will have the opportunity to sample selected wines with a paired cheese, while experiencing the many unique scents and aromas found in both.

\$5 per person. No reservations necessary. For contact information see next page.



Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

February 2003

Hearty Red Wine and Cheese Experience

Weekends in February, 11:00am to 4:00pm.

Journey through a selection of our finest limited edition Pinot Noirs and Cabernets, both from past and present vintages, with a featured cheese.

No reservations necessary. Minimal fees apply. For further information please contact our boutique 1 888 466 4754 Ext. 311 or 905 468 3554 Ext. 3.

❖ **Konzelmann**

Days of Wine and Roses

Daily in February, 11:00am to 5:00pm.

Konzelmann Estate Winery is pleased to present the rose "Jacaranda" with our 2000 Gewürztraminer Reserve.

No charge.

Spice up Life

Weekends in February, 11:00am to 4:00pm.

Join us and savour the spicy flavours of Zweigelt paired with rosebud chocolate truffles.

\$3.00 per person.

Winemaker's Luncheon

Saturday, February 15, 1:00pm.

Experience winter in wine country. Revel in the Chef's creations paired with Konzelmann wine while enjoying a progressive three-course luncheon.

\$50.00 per person. Reservations required. 905 935 2866 or wine@konzelmannwines.com.

❖ **Pillitteri**

Days of Wine and Roses

Daily in February.

Pillitteri Estates Winery will be showcasing the rose "Cardinal" paired with our Select Late Harvest Riesling.

No charge.

❖ **Santé: The Bloor-Yorkville Wine Festival**

May 6 to 10.

Toronto hosts this five-day premier wine festival. Santé was founded in 1998 and is jointly organized by the Bloor-Yorkville Business Improvement Area (BYBIA), the Wine Council of Ontario (WCO), and Toronto Life Communications.

In 2002, this successfully growing Festival featured 69 wineries from 10 countries: Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain and the United States.

Each year, it is Santé's goal to present a line-up of events that will both entertain and educate the Toronto consumer as well as provide a beneficial opportunity for participating wineries to showcase and promote their products to Toronto's many existing and aspiring wine lovers.

What sets Santé apart from other wine & food events? For a winery to be accepted into the Festival they must guarantee the attendance of their winemaker or owner. It is these winemakers or owners who pour the wines for guests attending any of the Festival's events.

Tickets for Santé events will be available from TicketMaster in February 2003. For detailed information about events, visit www.santewinefestival.net.

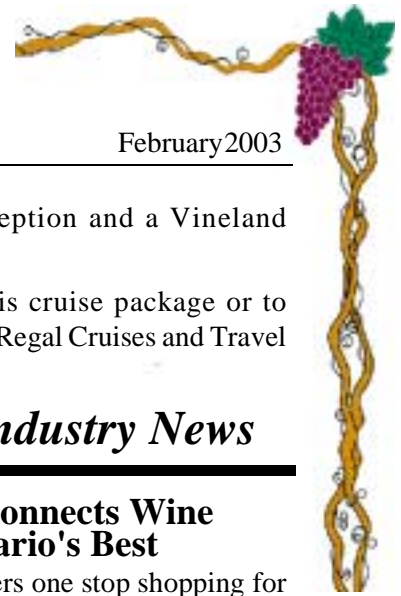
❖ **Stonechurch**

Romance at Stonechurch

Daily in February.

Enjoy a glass of Stonechurch 1998 reserve Cabernet Sauvignon presented with a decadent Cabernet chocolate. Enhance your leisurely visit and read beautiful poetry by local Tamara Mietins in front of a romantic fire.

\$6 per person. No reservations required. See contact information below.



Aphrodites Aphrodisiacs

Saturday, February 15, seminars hourly from 12:00pm to 4:00pm.

Learn everything you ever wanted to know about oysters. This aphrodisiac is sure to bring extra romance to your Valentine weekend. Oyster bar provided by Niagara Oyster Company.

Six oysters for \$6. No reservations required. 905 935 3535 or 1 866 935 3500 or wine@stonechurch.com.

❖ **Strewn**

Chocolate and Wine: A Heavenly Match

February 1,2, 11:00am and 2:30pm.

There's nothing more romantic than chocolate but what wine do you match up?

Our hour-long seminar looks at various styles of chocolate and discusses why each is a perfect partner for one or more Strewn wines. Join Lyle Bleich of Bernard Callebaut Chocolates and winemaker Joe Will. You'll sip, sample and pick your favourite combination!

\$15 per person. Reservations required. 905 468 1229.

❖ **Vineland**

Valentines Day Sweetheart Menu

Friday, February 14, Saturday, February 15.

Join us with Mark Picone at Vineland Estates Restaurant as we feature a special Sweethearts Pairing Menu of gastronomic delights to please the senses and warm your heart.

For menu information or reservations, call 1 888 846 3526 Ext. 25.

Golden Princess Wine Cruise ~ Barcelona to Venice

May 4 to 17.

Vineland Estates Winery presents an executive wine cruise from Barcelona to Venice hosted by Allan Schmidt, General Manager and original winemaker at Vineland. This unique experience is limited to 50 guests for 12 nights aboard the "Golden Princess". Special features include an exclusive pre-cruise Winemaker's Dinner at Vineland Estates, a special Icewine tasting

onboard, cocktail reception and a Vineland Estates gift basket.

For information on this cruise package or to reserve your cabin, call Regal Cruises and Travel at 1 800 461 7447.

Ontario Wine Industry News

❖ **Winerytohome Connects Wine Lovers with Ontario's Best**

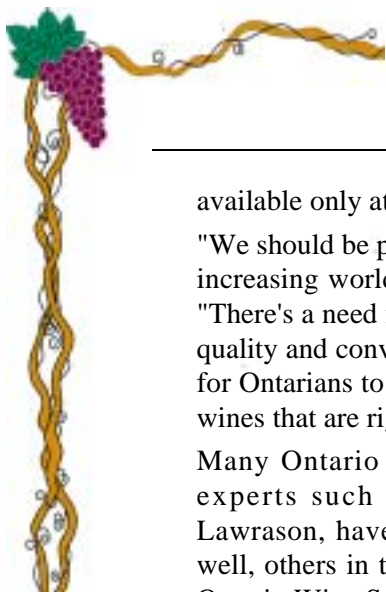
First of its kind site offers one stop shopping for wine enthusiasts. - Toronto, Ontario, January 14, 2003

Starting today, Ontario wine lovers can access some of the province's best kept secrets with the introduction of Winerytohome, a web site that offers the purchase and delivery of many of Ontario's finest wines, including limited edition vintages currently only available at the wineries.

Winerytohome is an interactive web site offering online sales and information for many popular Ontario wineries including Cave Spring Cellars, Creekside Estate Winery, EastDell Estates, Henry of Pelham Family Estates, Joseph's Estate Winery, Lakeview Cellars Estate Winery, Reif Estate, Strewn, Thomas & Vaughan Vintners and Thirty Bench Vineyard & Winery. By clicking on www.winerytohome.com, buyers can search out wines that best suit their needs ... a food or menu match, a particular winery or a taste profile.

"The majority of Ontario's wines are regularly available only at winery retail stores. Now there's a solution for both wine lovers and the wine producers," enthuses Doug Towers, President, Winerytohome. "People can buy any quantity of the wines that they want and have them delivered right to their door. In addition, the wineries have a chance to expand their current customer base."

Offering, secure e-commerce capabilities, Winerytohome is opening up a new sales channel for the province's vintners. Currently, Ontario wines are sold only through the Liquor Control Board of Ontario and winery retail stores, including those at the wineries. Close to 70 per cent of Ontario wines are regularly



Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

February 2003

available only at these winery retail stores.

"We should be proud. Ontario wines are gaining increasing worldwide acclaim," added Towers. "There's a need for this service and it's all about quality and convenience. We're making it easier for Ontarians to access some of the world's best wines that are right here in our own backyard."

Many Ontario vintners, as well as industry experts such as Tony Aspler and David Lawrason, have endorsed Winerytohome. As well, others in the wine industry including, the Ontario Wine Society and the Opimian Society, Canada's largest wine society, are strong supporters.

To assist with their purchases, visitors to the site can view wine descriptions. They can also sign up for free Winerytohome newsletter e-mails and obtain a range of relevant and current information about the Ontario wine industry. In the months ahead, visitors will be able to purchase wine accessories, sign up for wine appreciation and tasting courses, as well as Ontario Wine Country tours.

Purchases are made online with credit cards and are delivered throughout the Greater Toronto Area from Oakville to Ajax and north to Aurora and Newmarket at times that are convenient to the customer. Over the next few months, the service will expand to delivery locations across the province.

The minimum cost for delivering a case of wine to the Greater Toronto Area, including Oakville and Mississauga is \$12. A \$4 premium applies to orders for Ajax, Aurora and Newmarket. Visit the web site for delivery price details.

Winerytohome is a privately held, Ontario-based company. Winerytohome was founded by long-time wine lover Doug Towers. For more information, go to www.winerytohome.com or contact Doug Towers, president, 416 492 3102 or doughtowers@winerytohome.com.

Our Mistake

In the January 2003 issue, Maleta Estate Winery's 1999 Meritage should have been included as a Canadian Wine Award's best Meritage or Cabernet/Merlot Blend.

Feature Article

❖ **Have You Heard About...Prince Edward County?**

By Debra Marshall

The recent emergence of a wine industry in Prince Edward County in Eastern Ontario is bringing about some of the most exciting and positive economic changes that have occurred in the community in the past three decades.

The County, surrounded by the waters of Lake Ontario, traditionally has been an agriculture-based community with the canning and apple industry being its claim to fame. With the demise of the canning industry, local farmers changed their strategies to cash crops and continued fruit production. The apple industry in Prince Edward County is following the same path as in other parts of Ontario ... Enter the vineyard.

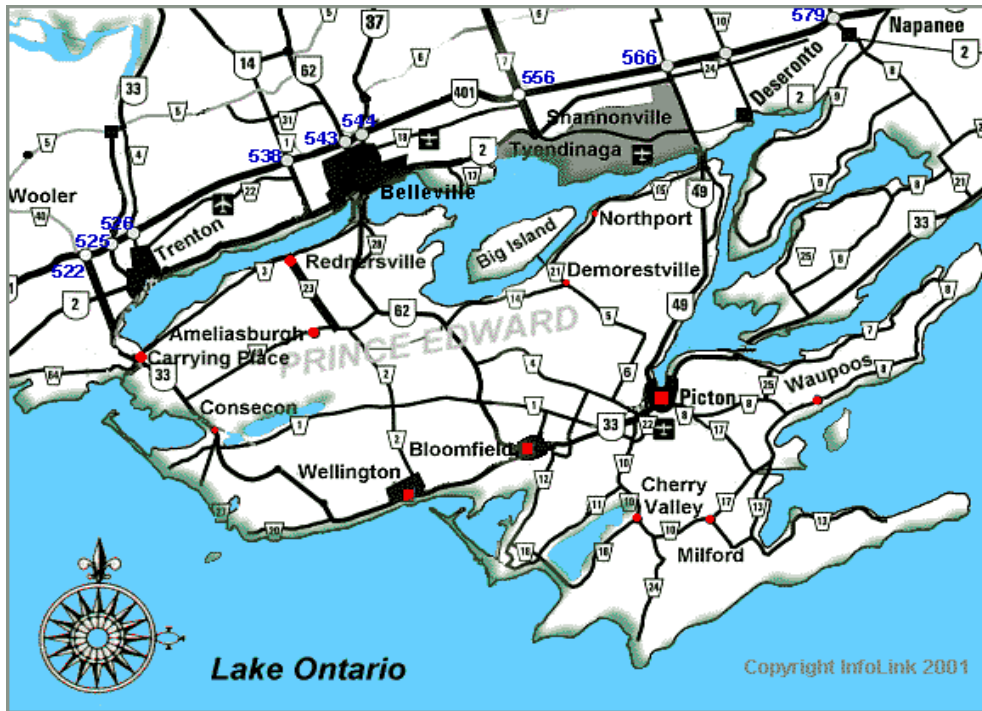
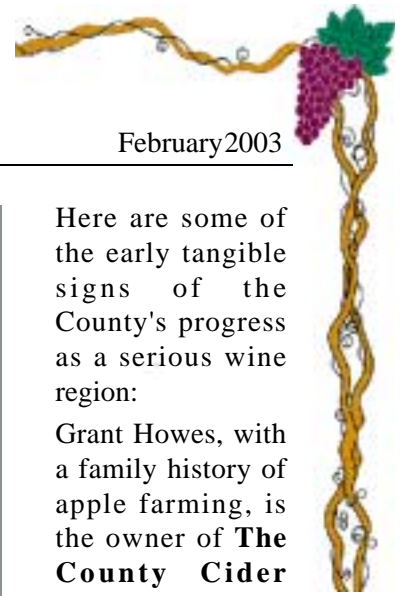
Some 8 years after the arrival of the first few adventurous pioneers, there are now more than 50 vineyards planted in the County, ranging from hobby plots of 200 vines to 30-acre farms with tens of thousands of vines. The County has more than 400 acres of vines in the ground, with an additional 100 acres scheduled to be planted in 2003. 2002 marked the first harvests from major plantings of vinifera and 2003 promises to be an even more substantial harvest throughout the region. With some of the first vineyards now producing, the inevitable appearance of wineries in the region has occurred.

The Prince Edward County Winegrowers Association has 37 full members, and 22 associate members who include hobbyists, interested enthusiasts and industry related businesses. The majority of vineyard owners are not experienced viticulturists, but wine enthusiasts with a passion for the grape. Only a few members have farming, wine or viticulture backgrounds. Our members consist of lawyers, accountants, engineers, journalists, politicians, marketing professionals, IT specialists, filmmakers, entrepreneurs, military personnel and academics. A collegial, cooperative spirit exists amongst these pioneers, who are trying to

Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

February 2003



Here are some of the early tangible signs of the County's progress as a serious wine region:

Grant Howes, with a family history of apple farming, is the owner of **The County Cider Company**, the first retail outlet in Prince Edward County under a winery license. In 2002, Mr. Howes began the sale of wines made from both Niagara and County grapes, and

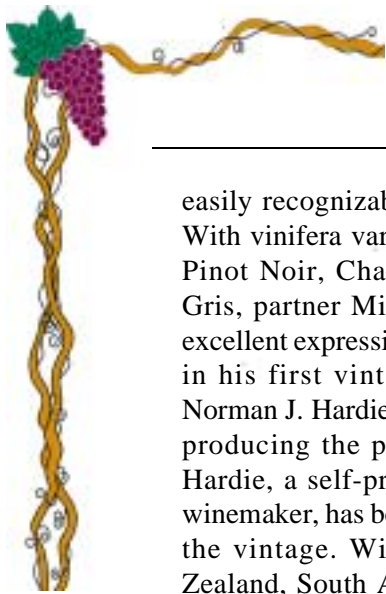
build their own businesses and an industry simultaneously. Through research, courses, networking and hands-on experience, members are gaining experience as viticulturists and the vineyards are making their mark on the local landscape. A number of the vineyard owners have moved to the County to pursue their viticulture dreams full time, while others are still tied to their city desks as they work to establish their dream. The creation of agricultural jobs within this industry has been a positive development for the local residents.

Some of the attraction of Prince Edward County as a viticulture region lies in the County's soils, the moderating lake effect, as well the region's fit with the accepted parameters of a "Cool Climate Viticulture Area". With latitude similar to regions in Burgundy, these growers hope in time to be able to produce unique, quality wines from the calcareous-based soils. Although climate differs substantially from European regions, through careful vine and site selection, alternate winter survival strategies and continued research, the vineyards of Prince Edward County are anticipated to become a destination for tourists and wine lovers throughout Ontario and northern United States.

2003 will see the release of the Cider's own Gamay, Zweigelt and Giesenheim. The location's deep clay soils should produce some authentic County wines that will express the unique soil and minerality content. Located in a historical limestone farm building and with a newly renovated retail area, County Cider now offers culinary respite for the visitor as well, with a spectacular view of Waupoos Bay.

The second licensed retail outlet to open was **Waupoos Estate Winery**, owned by Ed Neuser and Rita Kaimins. Also located in Waupoos, this vineyard was established about 6 years ago on property that used to house apple orchards. The Waupoos Estate Winery produces a wide variety of wines, from both Niagara and County grapes. The grand opening of the winery in 2000 drew substantial attention to the viticulture movement in Prince Edward County. The elegant limestone winery and retail outlet has drawn a great number of visitors, and in 2002 the winery opened its own restaurant overlooking the picturesque eastern shores of the County.

Peddlesden Wines is a new winery located south of the village of Hillier. The 30-acre vineyard is planted on Hillier Clay Loam that is



Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

February 2003

easily recognizable by the high stone content. With vinifera varieties such as Cabernet Franc, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Riesling and Pinot Gris, partner Mike Peddlesden anticipates an excellent expression of the minerality of the soils in his first vintage to be released in 2003. Norman J. Hardie, a globetrotting winemaker, is producing the partnership's first wines. Mr. Hardie, a self-proclaimed non-interventionist winemaker, has been hands-on in every aspect of the vintage. With vintages in France, New Zealand, South Africa, California and Oregon under his belt, Mr. Hardie brings a vast oenological knowledge to the region. The Grand Opening of Peddlesden Wines will be held in 2003.

Our fourth winery will officially open in 2003. **By Chadsey's Cairn Winery and Vineyards**, is located just west of the village of Wellington, overlooking Lake Ontario. The vineyard is situated on what was once a beach. The soils are deep, clay and sand, with a heavy component of beach gravel and stone. Owners Richard Johnston and Vida Zalnieriunus will present their first commercial vintage in their retail outlet in a renovated "Apple House". The winery is located in a century old post and beam barn. Looking for the true expression of the varietal, By Chadsey's Cairn will be producing wines grown from vineyards with little chemical intervention. The vineyard's Riesling, Chardonnay and Gewurtztraminer will be featured this coming season, along with a Gamay made from Niagara-on-the-Lake fruit. 2003 will see the first Pinot Noir and Chenin Blanc vinified from this location.

Another winery slated to open in the near future is **Black Prince Winery** in Picton. General manager, Geoff Webb, has indicated that the 10 acres of hybrid and vinifera vines planted in 2002 will provide the basis for wines produced at this location. Plans for custom crush and vinification for other growers are also on the drawing board. Black Prince Winery hopes to offer a variety of wines, from both local grapes and those from other areas, to offer to visitors upon their opening.

Huff Estates has vineyard locations in South Bay and at Highways #62 and #1 in Hallowell Township, and a winery in design. Lanny Huff, one of a handful of "born and raised" County growers, has selected his unique South Bay location to produce primarily Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. The location on the southern shores of the County has given initial indications of a longer growing season and a meso-climate conducive to the production of these varieties.

The Waring House Inn, a popular vacation destination located just west of Picton, has established **The Waring House Vineyard**, where visitors can walk through a manicured vineyard featuring both vinifera and hybrid varieties. Owner Chris Rogers anticipates increasing the acreage of vines on the property to produce a Waring House wine for his popular restaurant and pub.

The Merrill Inn on Main Street East, Picton is home to the County's first **Wine Bar**. Edward Schubert, a veteran of the hospitality industry in metropolitan centres, has welcomed the addition of County wines to his extensive wine list at his **Sir Edward Pub**, along with a menu featuring enticing entrees to accompany the wine experience.

The wine industry in Prince Edward County has achieved great strides in just a few short years. The future wineries in Prince Edward County will present a wide range of approaches, from large production facilities to small farm gate operations. With a growing number of fine dining venues established throughout the County, there is no shortage of culinary and wine experiences to be enjoyed.