Spring 1985

No. 15, The Gadding Vine, Spring 1985

Markko Vineyard
Day Ghosts

Spring thaw peels loose the leaves snow caught last fall before they had really settled down: now, windy Sunday, they stir over dry lawn and remnant windrows of ice, as if looking for the place they’d meant to go: but it’s not now as it was then settling-down time, and everywhere the leaves go greens are breaking out amid the funeral arrangements and the eyes of jonquils hold on to their morning tears and demure snowdrops try not to look so bright.

— A. R. Ammons

Once again a self-conscious Spring blows through our corner of Ohio like a whisper, greening-up the Vineyard and breaking out the wild dogwood and flowering crabapple that color the surrounding fields. Overnight bare trellises spring to life, surprising you with their arrogance despite another blizzardy winter. A careful search among the vines reveals flagrant winter kill in the Chardonnay; Riesling and Cabernet, although stung too by frigid temperatures, appear more robust than the neighboring Chardonnay, as they search out the afternoon sun to warm themselves on the cool wires.

Showboat for the arts

Get out your picnic baskets . . . the Point Counterpoint II is on its way to Conneaut for a four day stay June 13th through June 16th, bringing live concerts, exhibits and workshops to the people of Northeast Ohio. This self-propelled Floating Center for the Arts is the summer home of the American Wind Symphony Orchestra of Pittsburgh who will highlight their stay in Conneaut with a free public concert “Symphony Under the Stars” Friday, June 14th at 8:00 P.M. Aside from the Concert, the public is invited on board to tour the art galleries, attend the family theatre and participate in music and poetry workshops with resident artists and writers.

In conjunction with the coming of Point Counterpoint II and Ohio Wine Month, Markko has planned its own small celebration with several fresh air events that we hope will satisfy wine and music lovers of all ages.

Markko Schedule

Friday, June 14 — “Cookout Under the Leaves”
5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M. Chicken on the grill, spinach salad, fresh strawberries and Markko Surprise. $6.00 per person (excluding wine). Bread and cheese available, reservations required.
8:00 P.M. Point Counterpoint Concert, Conneaut Harbor.
Saturday, June 15 — “Wine and Woodwinds”
2:00 P.M. Bicycle/Hiking Tour (new route).
5:00 P.M. Tasting — Bring your own picnic and we’ll provide a preview of Markko’s newest wines, $3.00 per person.
8:00 P.M. Concert (if rescheduled from Friday), Conneaut Harbor.
If there is no scheduled concert, Markko will present a small ensemble from the orchestra at the Winery.
Please call in reservations by June 10th at the latest. We hope you will take advantage of this visit by the American Wind Symphony and join us beforehand for a taste of Markko.

Grape Research

Ohio’s newest grape research station in Kingsville is now in the capable hands of manager, Greg Johns, a graduate of Ohio State University Viticulture program. Greg is a native of Mentor and makes the round trip daily back there while working out of a small trailer-lab on the Kingsville site during the day. Plowing and planting schedules are taking up most of Greg’s time as he works in cooperation with OARDC coordinator, Professor Garth Cahoon of the Wooster grape research station. Greg spent time in Trier following graduation and then on to Trier, Germany where he lived and worked in the vineyards of the Moselle Region. His experience and enthusiasm are a welcome addition to the new project.
NEW WINES OF ’85
1984 Riesling — Lot 402
We’ve bottled a fresh, fruity Riesling in celebration of the Ashtabula Goodwill Industries 50th anniversary and labeled it Goodwill Wine. 10% of the proceeds on wine sales go to the Goodwill organization. This pleasant wine has a slight sparkle with 3% residual sugar.

1982 Chardonnay Reserve — Lot 221
This wine received the highest award given — a silver medal — in the Ohio Wine Competition in Columbus last February.

1981 Cabernet — Lots 11, 12
Now a more friendly wine with one year’s mellowing in the bottle. Lot 11 needs additional aging, Lot 12 is softer.

1982 Cabernet — Lot 21
Very fruity, full aroma with a developing beautiful bouquet; less oaky than ’81.

NEW NOTES ON OLD WINES
1980 Riesling — We’ve had a problem with Lot 310 which started to referment in the bottle. We will gladly replace any bottles you might have in your cellar with another wine of your choice.

1980 Chardonnay — This wine appears to have darkened and will not hold well. A combination of late harvest grapes, botrytis and new toasted oak barrels used in its fermenting, contributed to the change in color. We encourage you to drink it now while it still has the nice characteristics of a Chardonnay with a very soft taste and nice oak tones. We are offering a special case price of $55.00 (regularly $75.60 ) to all our customers if you’re interested in a 5 year old chardonnay.

OFF THE LEES . . .
Arnie traveled to Germany in February for a 12 day visit to the Rheingau region and the small town of Kiedrich where he walked the vineyards in the snow and watched the pruners at work. Kiedrich is one of the oldest towns in Germany with a lovely Gothic cathedral dominating the landscape and music from a boys choir that “transports you to another century.” His visit there was prompted by an international conference of winegrowers who met to tour the surrounding vineyards and taste the wines of the region. A side trip to visit relatives in Strasbourg, France and a brief tour of Alsation vineyards was enticing enough to think about another trip over — with an interpreter in tow, (the French language was unfortunately unintelligible for this German-born vintner and frankly a discussion on vineyard practices is a bit hard to decipher in sign language). Arnie’s sister Alice Sickels, a French linguist, is currently touring France with her family, so with the lure of a language specialist on his arm, the bags are by the door and the passport stamped for one more chance to see the French vineyards in bloom.

. . . Meanwhile back in the vineyard on South Ridge Road, Linda and Bernie are finishing up the pruning chores by means of a new piece of equipment — a pneumatic pruner. The machine allows two people to prune simultaneously off of one machine with less tiring results. It’s a time-saver for what is normally a very slow operation . . . Markko’s first annual sing-along cross-country ski outing turned into a comfortable evening for the good size crowd on band. Thanks go to Will Venable (the Singing Psychologist) for stepping in to lead the singing skiers who discovered (once they warmed up) that “here we will sit and let the sounds of music creep in our ears” provided there’s a warm meal and a glass of wine at the end of the road . . . Remember to use Markko as a picnic place this summer. We have one of the finest township parks on the Lake Erie shore and a plethora of historic bridges and buildings to visit. Reservations aren’t needed and you’re welcome to use our facilities whenever you’re in the area.

WINE AND WALLEYE

Fresh fish on the grill and a glass of Chardonnay are succulent companions on a hot afternoon. All you have to do is figure out how to catch the fish and we’ll supply the wine.

The Conneaut Rotary Club is sponsoring a Walleye Derby Saturday, June 29th (Rain Date Sunday, June 30), at the Conneaut Public Dock. A first place award of $3,000.00 will be given with additional prizes up to 10th place. There is an entry fee per boat of $160.00 (4 people to each boat). Entries may be sent to Tournament Committee, c/o Conneaut Chamber of Commerce, 289 Main Street, Conneaut, Ohio 44030, or called in to (216) 593-2402. For additional information or entry forms, contact Arnie at the Winery. Our grills will be available on Derby Day to any angler who decides he or she would prefer to eat their catch rather than mount it on their living room wall. Good fishing!