

Le Toussaint offering

NOVEMBER 1, 2021



BACHELDER

MAPPING NIAGARA. ONE VINEYARD AT A TIME.



A NOTE FROM THE WINEMAKER ON

vintage 2019

"Pronouncing on a vintage as it is "born" i.e., "released" (just 24 months after the juice became wine) is a risky game."

"The 2019s - both in PN and Chardo - are surprisingly rich, and show the precision and focus of a long, cool but ultimately-quite-ripe vintage packed with minerality and deep flavours! 2019 seems delicious now (and the Pinot Noirs currently round out impressively and show their enticing perfumes after being decanted for three or more hours*), the fine tannins and great balanced extract point to a great ageability, making 2019 undoubtedly a vintage to cellar, follow and watch it blossom!"

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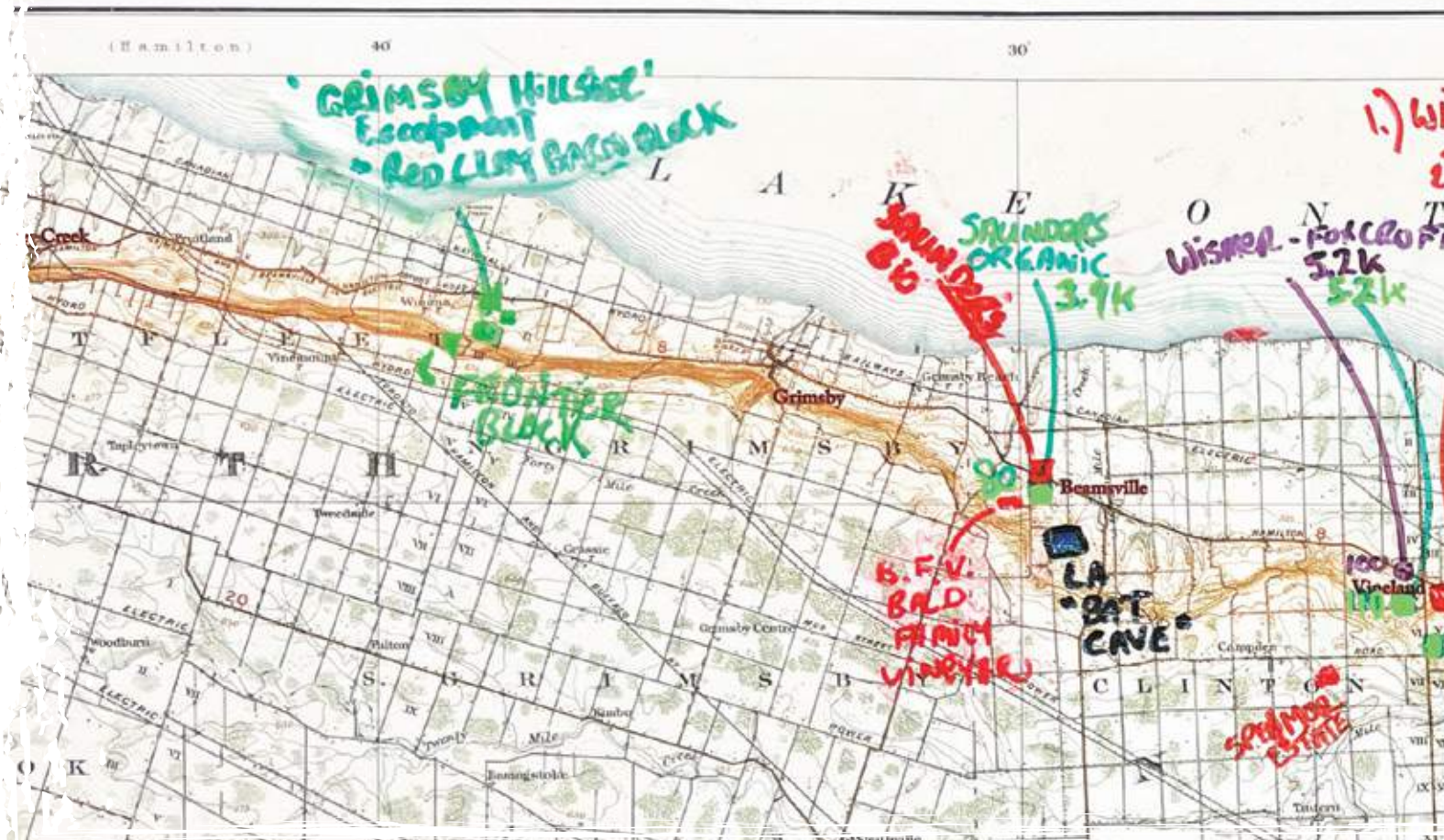
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THE TOUSSAINT RELEASE 2021

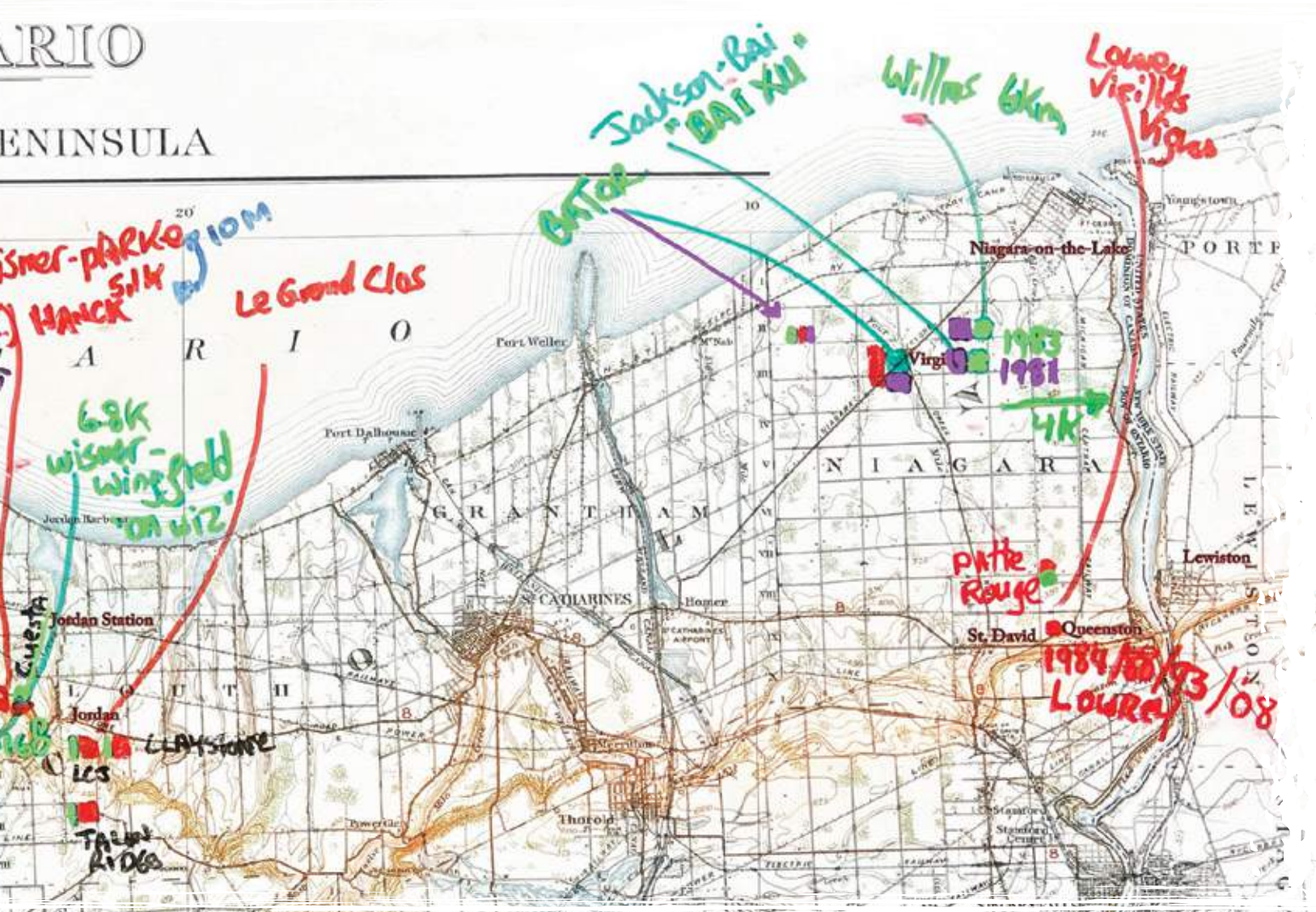
*it takes a long time
to discover terroirs.*

The French, Swiss, Germans, Spanish, Italians, Central & Eastern Europeans and many others have been at it for thousands of years! Us New Worlders have been at it for but a few decades!

When planting a new region, You can use any grape type that works on your soils - and with your climate - and the terroir will be there - patiently waiting to be discovered.

In our case, the Burgundian grapes, led by Pinot Noir (*Chardonnay and Gamay Noir*) are our beacon, our interpreters, literally translating the sense of the soil into a delicious wine 'of a place' in one's glass. Pinot Noir's thinner skin allows for less colour, perhaps, but also finer flavours: delicate, bewitching aromas, perfumes, bouquets... but especially for the transparency of its delivery of terroir, of a taste, a tang of somewhere, the singular signature taste of each vintage. Both Chardonnay and Gamay Noir are capable of these same subtleties in rendering 'Somewhereness'.

The Toussaint Release may fall on 'All Saints Day' in the calendar, but for us, it signals the release of our 2019 Single-Vineyards - Our "Saints" - from precious parcels of vines starting in Hamilton



East, and progressing across the peninsula, all the way down to the very tip of "Old Town" Niagara-On-The-Lake!

The Toussaint Release also signals that another harvest – 2021 - is over, and the babies, our "pièces bourguignons" have been put to bed in the nursery... to slumber peacefully for at least another year-and-a-half...

Discovering and channeling terroir is our raison d'être, has become our lives' work. Although we Love the process of making our subtle 'les Villages' blends, and we obsess about them, striving to find complexity and harmony through blending, the single-vineyards are what drives the Bachelder project!

Our "Saints" are all different from each other... reflecting our efforts to 'get out of the way' and let the best parcels, the most harmonious barrels come forward to liberate and define small patches of land. Important, not important? It is for you to think about, understand and weigh in. We have fourteen wines in 2019 – seven Chardos and seven Pinots!

The work on this vintage was started two and a half years ago in Spring 2019, now it is your turn to come on the journey with us... Surely there's a lot more left to discover just up the road ahead.

santé

Mary & Thomas Delaney-Bachelder

willms

"VIGNES DE 1983" FOUR-MILE CREEK VQA CHARDONNAY 2019

What is it that makes older vines from a warmer area so mineral, so classic?

THE PARCEL

This Chardonnay vineyard is right down near Old Town in NOTL, and is from the Four-Mile-Creek VQA, and was planted way back in 1983, when there was hardly any vinifera in Niagara! Both the Chardonnay and the Gamay Noir are from old vines planted in 1983 - the Willms Vineyard (which was called "Sandstone" in an earlier incarnation) is uniquely located between two bodies of water, some 6 km from the lake, and about 4 km from the Niagara River. It is a combo of silt, loamy-clay, gravel, limestone and sand."

THE TASTING

The Willms site is an enigma: it produces subtly waxy Chardonnay with minty green, orange and yellow citrus on the nose; intense and broad, yet elegant, with a subtly-shaded minerality as palpable as the bench. Willms possesses a texture that belies its Niagara-On-The-Lake origins: My theory is that the deep old vine roots and silty, slightly-sandy soils confer a savoury minerality to the wine - It is broad and long, honeyed, elegant, and fabulously-textured!

THE GROWER

Erv and Esther Willms bought the farm in 1981, which had been a cow field for a long time. Along with son Eric and daughter Rebecca, today they run the old-vines part of the farm, much of which was planted in 1983 and 1987. When the vineyard has just been cultivated, then followed by a rain, the dirt is washed off the stones, and they are clearly visible. Thus, they named the vineyard Sandstone, when they founded the original 13th St. Winery in 1998, in which the Willms were partners (at that time, on 13th Street in Louth), and the winery bought all their grapes under the vineyard name "Sandstone."

SOIL COMPOSITION

Clay-loam till: a combo of silt, loamy-clay, gravel, limestone and sand. The soil is not incredibly sandy, but with a cultivator works up as nicely as if it were sand. The soils the 1983 Chardonnay is planted on are sandier than most. One can easily sink a shovel or a hoe into it. The rest of the vineyard has lots of stone and gravel.

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 14% alc./vol; 2 g/l residual sugar, 100 cases made.





SUB-APPELLATION: Four-Mile Creek VQA Chardonnay
DATE OF PLANTATION: 1983
DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 6.9 KM
ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 98M
METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD: 2M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A ‘SENSE OF PLACE’ PERSPECTIVE.

So different from the Bai Xu vineyard, just one line over on Line 3, The age of the Willms vineyard and the deeper roots of older vines in a warmer area is a mitigating factor, in that it helps buffer out the extreme summer weather, whether wet and or drought, and deliver reliable wines of terroir each year. Deep roots and slightly-different soils is part of the reason these two neighbouring vineyards give SUCH different wines.

AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2017 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 10th of October, 2017. Initially a wonderful combination of rich and tight minerality, it looks set to improve for another year or so.

2018 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 9th of October, 2018. More complex than the 2017, despite the hotter summer. Elegant and saline-chalky - long!

2019 AGEABILITY

| Harvested 20th of October, 2019. The apparent delicacy belies the firm fruit from small-berried grape bunches. Interesting florality, Try in 2022, 2023, up to 2025 without worrying.

2020 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 4th of October, 2020. Still maturing steadily in barrel, the final selection of barrels from this site is months away from being done. The wines are full but balanced.

2021 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 18th October, 2021. Pressed, in barrel fermenting away, and looks to be a pretty vintage with great minerality. More, we cannot know just now.

willms

MAGNUM

MAGNUMS AT CHRISTMAS ONLY Please See Willms Vineyard

THE PARCEL Please See the Willms Vineyard.

THE TASTING

It is to be remembered that, in this case, the magnum version is not just in a larger bottle than the regular bottling, but is a different wine, fermented in a *single older Puncheon* (500l instead of the typical Burgundian 'piece,' which is 228l). Thus, with the differences of both cooperage and bottle size, although this wine is still quite broad and honeyed – obviously NOTL – it is at once much tighter, currently less obviously inviting, and most certainly has quite a long life ahead of it. It will be so instructive – so cool – to watch it mature alongside the 750ml bottling. (Note to Self: The Wismer-Wingfield Ovest is also captured in 'Puncheon Reserve' Magnums, and it'll be interesting to see both wines' ageability).

THE GROWER Please See the Willms Vineyard.

SOIL COMPOSITION Please See the Willms Vineyard.

DETAILS Please See the Willms Vineyard.

Please See the Willms Vineyard for the information below.

SUB-APPELLATION;

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO;

ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD;

**METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP TO BOTTOM
OF VINEYARD:**

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Please See the Willms Vineyard.





"VIGNES DE 1981" FOUR-MILE CREEK VQA CHARDONNAY 2019

The Bai Xu vineyard is one of the oldest vinifera plantings in the region: their Grape Grower number is 011!! - The Chardonnay and Gamay Noir vines are the oldest we have the pleasure to work with - 40 years-old at the 2021 Harvest!!!

THE PARCEL

The Byland Vineyard is located close to two major bodies of water, some 6 km from lake Ontario, and about 4km from the Niagara River. The Chardonnay and Gamay are now old vines, and were planted at the same time circa 1981 : The Chardonnay clone is 95, the Gamay clone is 358.

THE TASTING

One of the great delights of this release (at least, for 'the winemaker Papa!'), Bai Xu was planted just a couple years earlier than neighbouring Willms, and is just a little further from the Lake and the River. This wine 'pops' with Pinot-Blanc-like stone fruit and orchard fruit allusions: the flavours on the nose/mouth are incredibly complex, wound together in a sensual dance of textured pear-drop, silky flavours.

THE GROWER

Jackson and Amy Bai are the newer owners (2015) of one of the oldest vineyards in Niagara, which was planted 40 years ago, back in 1981! Jackson left his former career to become a vigneron and proudly does all the vineyard hand work himself.

SOIL COMPOSITION

The soil is a mixture of sandy and loamy sediments over lacustrine clay with some silt, as well as limestone, with excellent moisture-holding properties, which help sustain the vines through the drier months of summer.

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 13,5% alc./vol; 2 g/l residual sugar, 75 cases made.

SUB-APPELLATION: Four-Mile Creek VQA Chardonnay

DATE OF PLANTATION: 1981

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 6.9 KM

ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 95M

**METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP
TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD:** 2M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

The soil is quite different from the Willms vineyard, just one line north over on Line 2, The age of the Bai Xu vineyard and the deeper roots of older vines in a warmer area is a mitigating factor in that it helps buffer out the extreme wet and or drought summer weather, and give reliable terroir wines, each year. Deep roots and slightly-different soils, that is partly why these two vineyards give SUCH different wines.

AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2019 AGEABILITY

| Harvested 12th of October, 2019. The apparent delicacy belies the firm fruit from small-berried grape bunches. The vintage and the site both present an interesting stone-fruit florality, Try in 2022, 2023, up to 2025 without worrying.

2020 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 26th of September, 2020. Still maturing steadily in barrel, the final selection of barrels from this site is months away from being done. The wines are full but balanced.

2021 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 7th October, 2021. Pressed, in barrel fermenting away, and looks to be a pretty wine with great minerality. More, we cannot know just now.

wismer -foxcroft

"NORD" TWENTY-MILE BENCH VQA CHARDONNAY 2019

What is it about the soil here, on the Vineland Bench that makes for wine with such a distinctive mineral tang?

THE PARCEL

Quickly becoming a reference vineyard for Niagara, with several different versions from local high-end producers available in any given year, the Wismer-Foxcroft Chardonnay vineyard is a steep, stony-silty clay and limestone site, and is 5.4 Km from the Lake at an altitude of 110 metres. For the first several years, Fox was but a component of our restaurant 'glass-pour' wines! Frustrated, in 2013, the idea came to me to isolate the southern, hilly part of the slope from the lower, less steep northern bit. Incredibly, whilst briefly passing through Niagara, famed genius British wine journalist **Andrew Jefford** (*Decanter* and others) saw both northern and southern juices that I had pressed and barreled separately during fermentation. Somehow, though the wines weren't yet finished fermenting – Andrew first pointed out the stony 'salinity' of the northern bit.

THE TASTING

Ever since Andrew Jefford's "constat," we 'trip' on the heavenly marine smells of crushed oyster shells, the savoury texture, lemon oil and sea-mineral tang finish that only the northern slope of this vineyard imbues to the wines produced thereof! Unforgettable.

THE GROWER

Now into the second generation, The Wismer family has been growing grapes on the Vineland Bench for 25+ years. They manage with great prowess - for themselves and others - some 300 acres. Craig Wismer, the leader/genius of it all, is a wine lover with a good palate, a man of passion and commitment, and he and I have been thick as thieves for years in our pursuit of understanding soils, terroirs, clones and viticulture. However, brothers Chris and Ken have brought nuance and precision to already excellently-run vineyards.

SOIL COMPOSITION

Dolomitic-limestone influenced clay soils with a solid silt component. "Loamy textures over clay/loam till." Executive Summary: 'Shallow Dolostone.'

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 14% alc./vol; 2 g/l residual sugar, 150 cases made.

SUB-APPELLATION: Twenty-Mile Bench VQA

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 5.4 KM

ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 110M

**METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP
TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD:** 15M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Both on the Vineland Bench and on the Jordan Bench*, the majority of vineyards are planted to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. This is a magic place for Chardonnay: amateurs of Niagara Bench Chardonnay from around the world (*who may have never visited the region*) have amply proved this point with their laurels, with their support. The secret lies in the ex-marine soils, and in the altitude and distance from the lake. In toto, it forms what could be called "Niagara's Grand Cru strip." Vineland Bench Chardonnay?" "Nuanced, fine, scented, great length, mineral, long-lived."



AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2013 AGEABILITY

Harvested on the 25th of September, 2013. The '13s had great verve and zest: drinking well now.

2014 AGEABILITY

N/A No single vineyard made. But '14s in general have hit their stride.

2015 AGEABILITY

Harvested on the 23rd of September, 2015. The '15s are still holding beautifully, despite tertiary signs.

2016 AGEABILITY

Harvested on the 12th of September, 2016. A warmer year that is still developing, fresh and long.

2017 AGEABILITY

Harvested on 10th of October, 2017. Initially a wonderful combination of rich and tight minerality, it looks set to improve for another year or so.

2018 AGEABILITY

Harvested on 23rd of September, 2018. More complex than the 2017, despite the hotter summer. Elegant and saline-chalky - long!

2019 AGEABILITY

Harvested on 5th of October, 2019. The apparent delicacy of the vintage, belies the firm fruit we got from the small-berried grape bunches. Interesting florality, Try in 2022, 2023, up to 2026 without blinking.

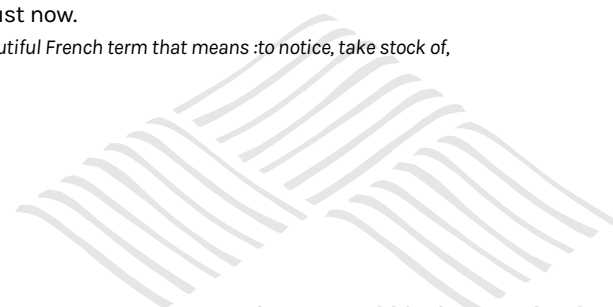
2020 AGEABILITY

Harvested on 21st September, 2020. Still maturing steadily in barrel, the final selection of barrels from this site is months away from being done. The wines are full but balanced.

2021 AGEABILITY

Harvested on 25th September, 2021. Pressed, in barrel and looks to be a pretty year with great minerality. More, we cannot know just now.

* Contat is the beautiful French term that means :to notice, take stock of, record, define."





"OUEST" TWENTY-MILE BENCH VQA CHARDONNAY 2019

The "Hill of Wingfield"

THE PARCEL

Some 'get' "Da Wiz" right away, some suddenly find they prefer it with a little age. Always noble, closed-in, restrained when young, the 'Wismer-Wingfield' Chardonnay is our latest ripening parcel, furthest from Lake Ontario (6,8km!), at the highest elevation (169m at the very top). The 'Hill of Wingfield' describes sharp slope through the shorter rows. Look back a page at the Fox's pick dates! "Da Wiz" comes in 10 days to three weeks after that parcel! One wants to call the "Hill of Wingfield" a 'Grand Cru,' however, with no classification system yet in place in Niagara, one is not allowed.

THE TASTING

The Hill of Wingfield delineates a sharp slope through the shorter rows, which makes for longer hang-time, and an intense, rich noble set of flavours, overlaid by a tight, long, tactile and flavourful finish. As well, the wine possesses a generous weight and elegant, slatey minerality. Majestic! *(Ultimately, with time in your glass - on your cellar - like the great horse 'Secretariat,' this wine slowly pulls away from the pack and widens the gap with the passing of the years).* We are all created equal, this is true, and wine's beauty is certainly at least partially in the eye of the beholder, but COME ON, the Wingfield is GRANDIOSE! Writing this, I re-tasted an open bottle after three days, and "Da Wiz" was just starting to step on the accelerator! Lesser terroirs fall to the wayside with that kind of treatment!

THE GROWER

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SOIL COMPOSITION

Dolomitic-limestone influenced clay soils with a solid silt component. "Loamy textures over clay/loam till." Executive Summary: 'Shallow Dolostone.'

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 14% alc./vol; 2 g/l residual sugar, 150 cases made.



SUB-APPELLATION: Twenty-Mile Bench
DATE OF PLANTATION: 1999
DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 6.8 KM
ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 169M
METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD: 5M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Both on the Vineland Bench and on the Jordan Bench*, the majority of vineyards are planted to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. This is a magic place for Chardonnay: amateurs of Niagara Bench Chardonnay from around the world (*who may have never visited the region*) have amply proved this point with their laurels, with their support. The secret lies in the ex-marine soils, and in the altitude and distance from the lake. In toto, it forms what could be called "Niagara's Grand Cru strip." Vineland Bench Chardonnay? "Nuanced, fine, scented, great length, mineral, long-lived."

AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2011 AGEABILITY | Harvested on the 6th of October, 2011. What incredible staying power and definition this cooler vintage had. Good then, better now!

2012 AGEABILITY | Harvested on the 25th of September, 2012. The '12s are rich and round, likely plateauing now.

2013 AGEABILITY | Harvested on the 19th of October, 2013. The '13s had great verve and zest: drinking well now.

2014 AGEABILITY | N/A Harvested the 21st and 28th of October, 2014. No single vineyard made. But '14s in general have hit their stride.

2015 AGEABILITY | Harvested on the 6th of October, 2015. The '15s are still holding beautifully, despite tertiary signs.

2016 AGEABILITY | Harvested on the 23rd of September, 2016. A warmer year that is still developing, fresh and long.

2017 AGEABILITY | Harvested on 29th of October, 2017. Initially a wonderful combination of rich and tight minerality, it looks set to improve for another year or so.

2018 AGEABILITY | Harvested on 5th of October, 2018. More complex than the 2017, despite the hotter summer. Elegant and saline-chalky- long!

2019 AGEABILITY | Harvested on the 29th of October, 2019. The apparent delicacy of the vintage belies the promise of longevity coming from the small-berried grape bunches we had that fall. Interesting florality, breadth, and incredible acid balance. Try in 2022, 2023, up to 2028 without worrying.

2020 AGEABILITY | Harvested on 3rd October, 2020. Still maturing steadily in barrel, the final selection of barrels from this site is months away from being done. The wines are full but balanced.

2021 AGEABILITY | Harvested on 21st October, 2021. Pressed, in barrel and looks to be a pretty year with great minerality. More, we cannot know just now.

wismer-wingfield

MAGNUM

MAGNUMS AT CHRISTMAS ONLY: Twenty-Mile Bench VQA Chardonnay PUNCHEON RÉSERVE

THE PARCEL Please See Wismer-Wingfield Vineyard.

THE TASTING

This Magnum version of 'Da Wiz' is not just in a larger bottle, but is actually made from a **single older Puncheon** (500l instead of the typical Burgundian 'piece' which is 228l). Thus, with the differences of both cooperage and bottle size, tasted from magnum at THIS time, this wine is still Wingfield, with its tight, oyster-shell, complex marine Vineland Bench minerality, but it is currently less expressive, with taut, reined-in stone fruit flavours, and clearly has a long life ahead of it. I expect it will be marvelous to watch and drink alongside the classic 750ml bottling as the years go by (Note to self: as the Willms Puncheon Réserve 2019 is also captured in Magnums, also as a 'Puncheon Reserve,' it will be interesting to see what this treatment will do to both wines' ageability).

THE GROWER Please See Wismer-Wingfield Vineyard.

SOIL COMPOSITION Please See Wismer-Wingfield Vineyard.

DETAILS Please See Wismer-Wingfield Vineyard.

Please See the Please See Wismer-Wingfield Vineyard for the information below.

SUB-APPELLATION; DATE OF PLANTATION;;

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO;

ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD;

METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD:

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Please See Wismer-Wingfield Vineyard.



cuesta

VQA CHARDONNAY 2019

Hidden up a narrow curving road, out of the eyes of passerby, the stunning Cuesta vineyard can be found on the left side of Highway 8 when driving into Vineland from Jordan*. You first come across this site on a beautiful, gentle slope just after the road rises out of the hollow.

THE PARCEL

At 5,5 Km from the Lake at an altitude of 133 metres, from the sweet spot of the Twenty-Mile Bench. One of the first vineyards on the Vineland side of the 20 Mile Creek with soils rich in limestone and silt.

THE TASTING

I worked with this vineyard for several years – at first for consulting clients, always intent on zooming in on the sub-parcels I found the most interesting and characterful, with the hopes of isolating distinctive wines with a real sense of whence they came! The Cuesta (*old lake coast*) vineyard produces focused, flinty, charming, even truffled Chardonnays with a switched-on white flower perfume and a darker, stony, marine-influenced-chalky finish. After a few vintages I DID find the ‘filet mignon’ – that far-off bit back near the forest escarpment ravine – no wonder it ripens late – we just ‘dig’ the **Far-Eastern** end of the vineyard, **Man!**

THE GROWER

Now into the second generation, The Wismer family has been growing grapes on the Vineland Bench for 25+ years. They manage with great prowess – for themselves and others – some 300 acres. Craig Wismer, the leader/genius of it all, is a wine lover with a good palate, a man of passion and commitment, and he and I have been thick as thieves for years in our pursuit of understanding soils, terroirs, clones and viticulture. However, brothers Chris and Ken have brought nuance and precision to already excellently-run vineyards.

SOIL COMPOSITION

Dolomitic-limestone influenced clay soils with a solid silt component. "Loamy textures over clay/loam till." Executive Summary: "Shallow Dolostone."

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 14% alc./vol; 2 g/l residual sugar, 50 cases made.

SUB-APPELLATION: Twenty-Mile Bench

DATE OF PLANTATION: 1999

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 5.5 KM

ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 123M

METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD: 10M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A ‘SENSE OF PLACE’ PERSPECTIVE.

Both on the Vineland Bench and on the Jordan Bench*, the majority of vineyards are planted to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. This is a magic place for Chardonnay: amateurs of Niagara Bench Chardonnay from around the world (*who may have never visited the region*) have amply proved this point with their laurels, with their support. The secret lies in the ex-marine soils, and in the altitude and distance from the lake. In toto, it forms what could be called "Niagara's Grand Cru strip." Vineland Bench Chardonnay? "Nuanced, fine, scented, great length, mineral, long-lived.

AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2019 AGEABILITY

I Harvested 13th of October, 2019. The apparent delicacy belies the firm stone fruit from small-berried grape bunches. Interesting florality, tight mineral tension. Try in 2022, 2023, up to 2025 without worrying.

**together grouped somewhat clumsily into the Twenty-Mile Bench Appellation.*



BEAMSVILLE BENCH VQA CHARDONNAY 2019

Ah! The conundrum that is Saunders Vineyard: Lake-effect and Bench-effect at once!!

THE PARCEL

Just 3,9km from the lake, but on the Bench at Mountainview road, Saunders is organically-grown* on clay, silt, sand & limestone. (*Certified by Ecocert.) the 'Haut' Chardonnay block is in the higher, Southern part of the vineyard in the older vines with an inspiring view of Lake Ontario.

THE TASTING

Wow! Beamsville Bench! The clay, silt, sand & limestone soils infuse the wines with fresh, inviting pear and honeyed notes (acacia? linden?), which intermingle with luscious minerality. It IS Bench, but it IS closer to the Lake..., thus is warmer, fleshier but-still-fine Bench!

THE GROWER

The Saunders story is a captivating, touching one: One of the first pioneer viticulturalists on the Bench, visionary Warren Saunders **turned 100 this year!** Riding out on his bicycle from the Hamilton steel mills on his Sundays off, Warren dreamed of owning land and eventually established the family farm on the Beamsville Bench when he and Ivy were in their 40's... Their children - Anne-Marie, Royce & Leslie Saunders - often worked alongside their parents, and the Saunders farm is still run by Leslie, Anne-Marie and her husband Peter, with guidance, as always, from Warren himself! In 2015, it was certified Organic! What the Saunders have achieved is humbling lesson that shows us what intent; commitment and constancy can achieve, and how it can influence and inspire us all. Santé, Warren!

SOIL COMPOSITION

Surprisingly, very little sand: Clay, silt, & limestone.

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 12,5% alc./vol; 2 g/l residual sugar, 50 cases made.

SUB-APPELLATION: Twenty-Mile Bench

DATE OF PLANTATION: 2011 & 2014

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 3.9 KM

ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 123M

**METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP
TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD:** 10M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Beamsville is SO close to the Lake that it is at once "The Bench" and "Lake-influenced." An interesting conundrum, and one to toy with as you swirl the glass and think about how the curves of the bench draw close to the lake - and sometimes don't! This, along with varied soil compositions, elevations and planting regimes, makes for a fascinating study! "It IS Bench, but it IS closer to the Lake...and thus is warmer, fleshier Bench!"



Photo Credit: Grape Growers of Ontario, Denis Cahill Photography

AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2010 AGEABILITY

| Mid-september 2010: Date lost in the mists of time. Wine still solid!

2011 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 5th of October, 2011. Initially a wonderful combination of rich and tight minerality, it looks set to improve for another year or so.

2012 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on the 15th of September, 2012. The '12s are rich and round, likely plateauing now.

2013 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on the 12th October, 2013. The '13s had great verve and zest: drinking well now.

2014 AGEABILITY

| N/A No single vineyard made. October 21st. But '14s in general have hit their stride.

2015 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on the 21st of September, 2015. The '15s are still holding beautifully, despite tertiary signs.

2016 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on the 5th of September, 2016. A warmer year that is still developing, fresh and long.

2017 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 3rd October, 2017. Initially a wonderful combination of rich and tight minerality, it looks set to improve for another year or so.

2018 AGEABILITY

| N/A No single vineyard made. October 21st. But '18s in general are just hitting their stride.

2019 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 13th of October, 2019. The apparent delicacy belies the firm fruit from small-berried grape bunches. Interesting florality, Try in 2022, 2023, up to 2025 without worrying.

2020 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 29th September, 2021. Pressed, in barrel and looks to be a pretty year with great minerality. More, we cannot know just now.

2021 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 7th October, 2021. Pressed, in barrel and is surprisingly well-coloured, with a lovely floral perfume and great verve. I have rarely been this excited about a Burgundian-style, vintage just born.



grimsby hillside

NORTHERN SLOPE FRONTIER BLOCK

A wild, stony, windscape site out in the Extreme west of Niagara. Nestled into the foothill of the Escarpment. Breathtaking, big sky country.

THE PARCEL

The Frontier Block - that is what it will be named next time, for the fact that it is the first - or the last - vineyard / terroir in Niagara!

THE TASTING

Another Great surprise of this release, (especially to me is the Grimsby Hillside Northern Slope Escarpment block. (in future releases it will simply be called 'Frontier Block,' as I am told it is the first planted vineyard within Niagara, coming east from Hamilton/Stoney Creek !!!) A grand and strikingly-beautiful 'Big Sky' site just east of Hamilton with a tangible identity, it is cooler and tends to be harvested quite late, retaining a slatey gunflint purity, and ethereal freshness and lacey yet weighty texture, finishing with a marked marzipan-inflected minerality. Just 122m metres above Sea level, it feels much higher than it is, betraying the incredible legacy of the visible vestiges of the escarpment in the vineyard. **NB It is a travesty that this vineyard must be labelled 'Lincoln Lakeshore' when it is so clearly "Bench" in flavour, terroir and location. Locals are hoping for a new VQA: "Grimsby Narrows!"**

THE GROWER

The Grimsby Hillside "Stardust" farm very likely has many fragments of at 4.6 billion years old meteorite that hit the vineyard on the night of September 25th, 2009, so there are some components in the soil that are a lot older than most soil in Niagara!!! The top soils vary from silty clay/loam mixes to grey and red clays, over top of heavy red clay subsoils, with another layer that appears to contain calcareous limestone shale and gravel deposits (suspected to be eroded material from the escarpment face that settled on the site. The vineyard was only underdrained every second row because of the amount of boulders that were under the ground, which made draining every row a cost-prohibitive exercise. All the limestone and granite boulders that were dug up during drainage installation are all still there along the edge of the escarpment. There's certainly many more tons left under our Chardonnay block, snuggled up as it is against the escarpment.

SOIL COMPOSITION

Surprisingly, very little sand: Clay, silt, & limestone.

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 12,5% alc./vol; 2 g/l residual sugar, 100 cases made.





SUB-APPELLATION: Lincoln Lakeshore

DATE OF PLANTATION: 2015

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 3.9 KM

ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 123M

METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD: 10M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Grimsby Hillside is another vineyard that is so close to the Lake that it is at once "The Bench" and "Lake-influenced."

AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2019 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 17th of October, 2019. The apparent delicacy belies the firm fruit from small-berried grape bunches. Interesting florality, Try in 2022, 2023, and try again from 2024-2028, even after which time it may surprise and continue to gain in subtlety and nuance.

2020 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 3rd October, 2020. Still maturing steadily in barrel, the final selection of barrels from this site is months away from being done. These are deep wines of mature fine tannins, rounder fruit than usual.

2021 AGEABILITY

| Harvested on 21st October, 2021. Pressed, in barrel and is surprisingly well-coloured, with a lovely floral perfume and great verve. I have rarely been this excited about a Burgundian-style, vintage just born.





OLD VINES ST. DAVID' BENCH VQA PINOT NOIR 2019

On the tail-end of the St. David's Bench, planted on the shores of the old riverbed of where the Niagara River used to run many moons ago, lies the picturesque Lowrey Vineyard. It is surely one of the great honours of our lives to work with this special place. The oldest, Eastern part of the vineyard was planted in 1984 by the Lowrey family for Karl Kaiser of Inniskillin. Karl used the vineyard for his groundbreaking international collaboration 'Alliance' series Inniskillin made with Burgundy's Jaffelin (Bernard Répolt, now with Remoissenet). This led to the idea of Le Clos Jordanne, that Mary & I (and the girls) moved to Niagara from Oregon to help start.

THE PARCEL

A mere 5 km from the Niagara River, and under its considerable influence, the Lowrey vineyard, located on the St. David's Bench, has complex soil variability and limestone content (due to both its glacial heritage, and the fact that the river actually used to run through the property many eons ago). The old-vine Pinot Noir is planted on a very specific two acre site on the sixty acre property, and is on a gentle slope at the foot of the escarpment. The block benefits from the air movement, which cools it in summer and also minimises "WinterKill" of dormant buds. The rows slope gently from south to north. The slope is north-facing, which may help "cool" it a bit in the late summer and fall heat. Getting enough heat is never an issue in St. David's, which is some 13 km from Lake Ontario and is locally considered a bit of a "SunTrap." St. David's longer growing season is usually due to a 10-14 day head start in the spring. The clay/loam seam runs through the entire block, but the percentage of clay is progressively higher the further you go north. The block has aged gracefully over the last thirty years, and seemingly adds new layers of complexity to its wines with each passing vintage. *(Some of this detail has been contributed by Wes Lowrey of the family's "Five Rows" winery).*

THE TASTING

This bottling is a deft blend of the '88 & '93 vines and is redolent of pretty roses and slightly-corrupt red raspberries, with forest-sourced tiny strawberries and an indescribable chalky-cherried edge. Fascinating; fine; fresh; mineral; so complex, long and just-unsettled tannins suggest its ageability: A ballerina with great core strength!

THE GROWER

Lowrey vineyard was initially planted in 1984 at the behest of Karl Kaiser (co-founder of Inniskillin) by the Lowrey family, and Howie, Wilma and son Wes still run the vineyards today with the utmost care and love. Their own winery is called 'Five Rows,' and they make wines of a purity to make one weep. Check them out! www.fiverows.com.

SOIL COMPOSITION

The soil is a combination of clay and loam, sitting on a limestone base layer. The theory is that the south end of the block sits just below the beach head of the glacial Lake Iroquois - avoiding the sandy soil pockets just to the north. Too much sand content would make growing a vigorous varietal like Pinot even more difficult to control.

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 12,5% alc./vol; less than 2 g/l residual sugar, 87 cases made.

SUB-APPELLATION: St. David's Bench

DATE OF PLANTATION: 1984; 1988; 1993

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 13 KM as the bird flies; Distance from the Niagara River: 5 KM

ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 119M

METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD: 5M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Those of us 'on the bench' who spend most of our waking hours trying to understand the Bench, its elevation and the relationship with the more-or-less close lake are always slightly uneasy when trying to explain Niagara on the Lake, and the St. David's bench in general. One is never sure why the SDB is warmer and always the first to be harvested... Far from the lake, close to the river, ever an enigma!



AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2011 AGEABILITY

I Harvested 4th of October, 2011 and is still a chalky, Burgundian-style reference for us... None in our cellar: if you have a bottle, please contact us at wine@bachelderniagara.com and we will arrange a tasting and trade. :)

2012 AGEABILITY

I Harvested 6th of September, 2012. Plush from the getgo. Tannins have softened and mellowed. None in our cellar: if you have a bottle, please contact us at wine@bachelderniagara.com and we will arrange a tasting and trade. :)

2013 AGEABILITY

I Harvested 18th of September, 2013, a classic Burgundian-style vintage, and one of our favourites, has mellowed and matured into a glorious tertiary-scented, complex with still lots of fruit left.

2014 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 24th of September, 2014. Perhaps just a little hard upon release, has blossomed in a complexed, floral way. I expect it to improve for 2-3 years to come, then plateau and hold.

2015 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 16th September, 2015. Drinking beautifully now, will have the verve and energy to improve until 2023, potentially hold much longer.

2016 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 13th September, 2016. All the pinots from that year, had a delicious, cherried kirschy Grenache feel, and this is drinking with delicious complexity now, and will become more complex - perhaps peaking around 2024... and potentially hold much longer.

2017 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 4th October, 2017. Another mineral year that is perfumed and beautiful now, ethereal and alluring, will have the acid backbone to improve until 2028...and potentially hold much longer.

2018 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 20th September, 2018. The wines from this vintage remains an enigma for both Mary and I! A 'Grand Vin' nose: delicious young, lovely, cherry-berried and still a bit closed. Should continue to lengthen and continue to improve in perfume and tertiary complexity until 2027, but will definitely hold steady longer.

2019 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 30th September, 2019. Upon release, perhaps the best combination of transparency of terroir, and chalky, mineral full-fruitiness that we have yet seen. 2019 helps define this Lieu-dit, and even the Sub-App! The apparent delicacy belies the firm, rose petal florality, the iron-fist-in-a-velvet-glove that will come to define this wine, this vintage. Do not think of broaching this before 2023, if at all possible. Drink with glee from 2023-2030, even after which time it may surprise and continue to gain in subtlety and floral nuance.

2020 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 17th September, 2020. / Still maturing steadily in barrel, the final selection of barrels for the both 'Lieu-Dits' we make from this site is months away from being done. These are deep wines of mature fine tannins, rounder fruit than usual, still that same sense of chalkiness, with greater precision from Lowrey than one might expect from a warmer season.

2021 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 22nd September, 2021. Pressed, in barrel and is surprisingly well-coloured, with a lovely floral perfume and great verve. I have rarely been this excited about a Burgundian-style, vintage just born.

Lowrey

OLD EASTERN BLOCK
ST. DAVID' BENCH VQA PINOT NOIR 2019

Please See the Lowrey Vineyard

THE PARCEL Please See the Lowrey vineyard.

THE TASTING

How to describe the ineffable*? Red fruits almost only: a heavenly cranberry tinged with rhubarb, minty-menthol raspberries and deep-flavoured, long, long, rich, incisively-focused fruit. One seems to 'bite' into the chalk on the long finish. This is the 'Real Thang!' Effortless class and purity; a complete enigma if we did not know the terroir and age of the vines: one of the great honour of our lives to work with this oldest, Eastern part of the vineyard planted in 1984 and 1988 for Karl Kaiser of Inniskillin by the Lowrey family. *sacred, incapable of being expressed in mere words.

THE GROWER Please See the Lowrey Vineyard.

SOIL COMPOSITION Please See the Lowrey Vineyard.

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 12,5% alc./vol; less than 2 g/l residual sugar, 87 cases made.

DATE OF PLANTATION: 1984; 1988

Please See the Lowrey Vineyard for the information below.

**SUB-APPELLATION; DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO;
ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD;
METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP TO BOTTOM
OF VINEYARD:**

**WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A
'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.**

Please See the Lowrey Vineyard.

AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2016 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 13th September, 2016. All the pinots from that year, had a delicious, cherried kirschy Grenache feel, and this is drinking with delicious complexity now, and will become more complex - perhaps peaking around 2024... and potentially hold much longer.

2018 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 20th September, 2018. The wines from this vintage remains an enigma for both Mary and I! A 'Grand Vin' nose: delicious young, lovely, cherry-berried and still a bit closed. Should continue to lengthen and continue to improve in perfume and tertiary complexity until 2027, but will definitely hold steady longer.

2019 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 30th September, 2019. Upon release, perhaps the best combination of transparency of terroir, and chalky, mineral full-fruitiness that we have yet seen. 2019 helps define this Lieu-dit, and even the Sub-App! The apparent delicacy belies the firm, rose petal florality, the iron-fist-in-a-velvet-glove that will come to define this wine, this vintage. Do not think of broaching this before 2023, if at all possible. Drink with glee from 2023-2030, even after which time it may surprise and continue to gain in subtlety and floral nuance.

2020 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 17th September, 2020. / Still maturing steadily in barrel, the final selection of barrels for the both 'Lieu-Dits' we make from this site is months away from being done. These are deep wines of mature fine tannins, rounder fruit than usual, still that same sense of chalkiness, with greater precision from Lowrey than one might expect from a warmer season.

2021 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 22nd September, 2021. Pressed, in barrel and is surprisingly well-coloured, with a lovely floral perfume and great verve. I have rarely been this excited about a Burgundian-style, vintage just born.



TWENTY-MILE BENCH VQA PINOT NOIR 2019

Hidden up a narrow curving road, out of the eyes of passerby, the stunning Cuesta vineyard can be found on the left side of Highway 8 when driving into Vineland from Jordan. You first come across this site on a beautiful, gentle slope just after the road rises out of the hollow.

THE PARCEL

At 5,5 Km from the Lake at an altitude of 133 metres, from the sweet spot of the 20-Mile Bench. One of the first vineyards on the Vineland side of the 20 Mile Bench with soils rich in limestone and silt.

THE TASTING

The Cuesta (old lake coast) vineyard produces Pinot Noir that is all perfumed, delicious red berries: charming, but also focused, graphite-laced and gun-flinty, with cherried complexity. Good length, with a fruit-driven, 'crunchy' mineral finish. A cooler and later sight may explain this: always the last of the Pinots to be harvested, I hear anecdotally. Here's an odd thought: One of our 'lighter' terroirs to watch for surprising ageability!

THE GROWER

Now into the second generation, The Wismer family has been growing grapes on the Vineland Bench for 25+ years. They manage with great prowess - for themselves and others - some 300 acres. Craig Wismer, the leader/genius of it all, is a wine lover with a good palate, a man of passion and commitment, and he and I have been thick as thieves for years in our pursuit of understanding soils, terroirs, clones and viticulture. However, brothers Chris and Ken have brought nuance and precision to already excellently-run vineyards.

SOIL COMPOSITION

Dolomitic-limestone influenced clay soils with a solid silt component. "Loamy textures over clay/loam till."
Executive Summary: 'Shallow Dolostone.'

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 12,5% alc./vol; 2 g/l residual sugar, 75 cases made.

SUB-APPELLATION: Twenty-Mile Bench

DATE OF PLANTATION: 1999

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 5.5 KM

ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 123M

**METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP
TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD:** 10M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Both on the Vineland Bench and on the Jordan Bench*, the majority of vineyards are planted to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. We believe that the magic for Pinot Noir lies in both the altitude and distance from the lake and the soils, forming what could be called "Niagara's Grand Cru strip." We believe that the reddish brown soils of the lower Vineland bench bring a special iron-tinged, rusty wildness to what is essentially an excellent sub-appellation for making scented and nuanced Pinot Noir.

AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2019 AGEABILITY

I Harvested later than any other Pinot block on the 12th & 13th of October, 2019. The apparent delicacy belies the firm, rose petal florality, the iron-fist-in-a-velvet-glove that will come to define this wine, this vintage. Try in 2022, 2023, and try again from 2024-2028, even after which time it may surprise and continue to gain in subtlety and nuance.

**together grouped somewhat clumsily into the Twenty-Mile Bench Appellation.*

hanck

TWENTY-MILE BENCH VQA PINOT NOIR 2019

At just TEN metres to the North of Wismer-Parke, Hanck (*our newest baby on the 'Grand Cru' strip of the Vineland Bench!*) has a silky, red-fruited chalky charm that is utterly unlike the adjacent Wismer-Parke !

THE PARCEL

From the sweet spot of the Vineland Bench just east of Victoria and just upslope from Highway 8, on reddish magnesium and dolomitic-limestone clay soils.

THE TASTING

Located just 10 metres from Wismer-Parke, Hanck is - amazingly - happily different: Not 'Wild' at all, *really*, but expresses delicious, pretty, explosive, nearly-corrupt red raspberries and tiny forest-found strawberries, even Hibiscus juice nuances! Fascinating! Perfumed, luscious red fruit, with an underlying tight, flinty tension: Think rose-petal and red raspberry, even red appleskin and cranberry, red currant influence. Long, viscous and more raspberry pure-fruited than the signature Niagara deep red cherry and cherry-pit! Brighter Cherry-raspberry acidity hints at bright chalky minerality. Hanck may well come to be a pillar in the Bachelder canon of terroirs.

THE GROWER

The Hanck parcel is owned by Rob Harold and Joe Schenk - is located just 10 metres from Wismer-Parke! Farmed by the Wismer family, who has been growing grapes on the Vineland Bench for 25+ years. They manage with great prowess - for themselves and others - some 300 acres. Craig Wismer, the leader/genius of it all, is a wine lover with a good palate, a man of passion and commitment, and he and I have been thick as thieves for years in our pursuit of understanding soils, terroirs, clones and viticulture. However, brothers Chris and Ken have brought nuance and precision to already excellently-run vineyards.

SOIL COMPOSITION

Reddish magnesium-oxide and dolomitic-limestone influenced clay soils with a solid silt component. "Loamy textures over reddish clay/loam till." Executive Summary: 'Reddish, shallow Dolostone.'

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 13,0% alc./vol; 2 g/l residual sugar, 175 cases made.





SUB-APPELLATION: Twenty-Mile Bench
DATE OF PLANTATION: 2005
DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 5.5 KM
ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 126M
METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD: 9M
ELEVATION OF HIGHWAY 8 (FOR COMPARISON): 110M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

It matters because it is 120 Metres from Wismer-Parke and tastes totally different! Both on the Vineland Bench and on the Jordan Bench,* the majority of vineyards are planted to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. We believe that the magic for Pinot Noir lies in both the altitude and distance from the lake and the soils, forming what could be called "Niagara's Grand Cru strip." We believe that the reddish brown soils of the lower Vineland bench bring a special iron-tinged, rusty wildness to what is essentially an excellent sub-appellation for making scented and nuanced Pinot Noir.

AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2019 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 28th September, 2019. Upon release, perhaps the best combination of transparency of terroir, and chalky, mineral full-fruitiness that we have yet seen. 2019 helps define this Lieu-dit, and even the Sub-App! The apparent delicacy belies the firm, rose petal florality, the iron-fist-in-a-velvet-glove that will come to define this wine, this vintage. Do not think of broaching this before 2023, if at all possible. Drink with glee from 2023-2030, at which time it should continue to gain in subtlety and nuance.

2020 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 24th September, 2020. / Still maturing steadily in barrel, the final selection of barrels for the 'Lieu-Dit' months away from being done. We have both 'Eastern Hanc' and 'Western Hanc' So there is lots of choice. These are deep red and black-berried wines of mature fine tannins, rounder fruit than usual, though with greater precision than one might expect from a warmer season.

2021 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 3rd October, 2021. / Pressed, in barrel pre-malolactic, and showing incredible poise, depth, perfume and red-berried perfumed suave energy. So excited for this vintage just born.

*together grouped somewhat clumsily into the Twenty-Mile Bench Appellation.



wismer-parke

TWENTY-MILE BENCH VQA PINOT NOIR 2019

Meeting Wismer-Parke was like meeting a child I had to 'learn to love.' (in real life with our children, it was always 'love at first sight' ;) I had to give olives, beer, brussel sprouts, goat and feta cheese a second, third, fourth chance, and learn to love them I did! Hence, the wild bloody, 'bit your tongue' gaminess of Parke I had to get used to - much like Gevrey-Chambertin in Burgundy, which is never my first choice off a restaurant's Burgundy list, but always a terroir I greatly admire - from a safe distance! Not understanding, I declassified Parke to our 'Village' blend for a couple of vintages, slowly & eventually figuring out that that rustic, grainy-yet-fine Wismer-Parke character - despite it *Not being my favourite expression of the grape* - was nevertheless the 'real thing! I then proceeded to isolate the blocks, the rows, the barrels that MOST celebrated this unique, defining character. That is what stewardship, what élevage, what child-rearing is all about: helping them "get where they are going."

THE PARCEL

At 5,5 Km from the Lake at an altitude of 133 metres, from the sweet spot of the 20-Mile Bench on reddish magnesium and dolomitic-limestone clay soils with a solid silt component, 'Wismer-Parke' makes wines with a wild, rusty, anise-scented, iron-tinged nuance, yet a pretty, savoury mouthfeel. Now older vines, planted in 1999 to 115 and 667 on 3309 rootstock on reddish magnesium oxide-rich, silty/clay and limestone soil.

THE TASTING

Our Wismer-Parke Pinot Noir shows the classic Vineland (as distinct from Jordan) combination of plush richness, tight minerality, and the wild, 'bloody' iron-grip of red soils. At once a hedonistic, ageable and yet perfumed Pinot Noir, Wismer-Parke's vocation would seem to be one of a certain firm, wild prettiness, finishing with a long, ferrous-meets-chalk minerality. Planted just south of Highway 8 just uphill on the Bench, on a well-drained slope on the east side of Victoria Street in Vineland, the Wismer-Parke site is arguably one of Niagara's 'Grand Crus' for Pinot Noir.

THE GROWER

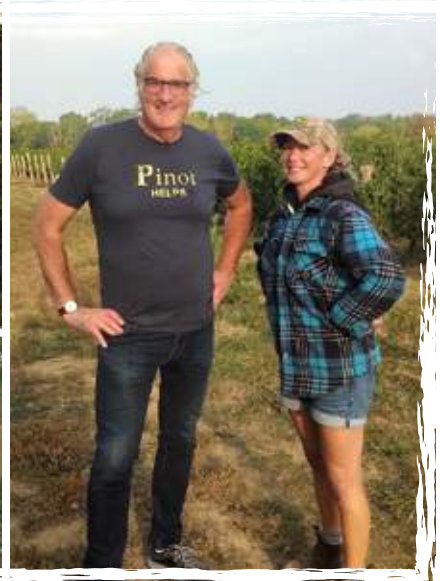
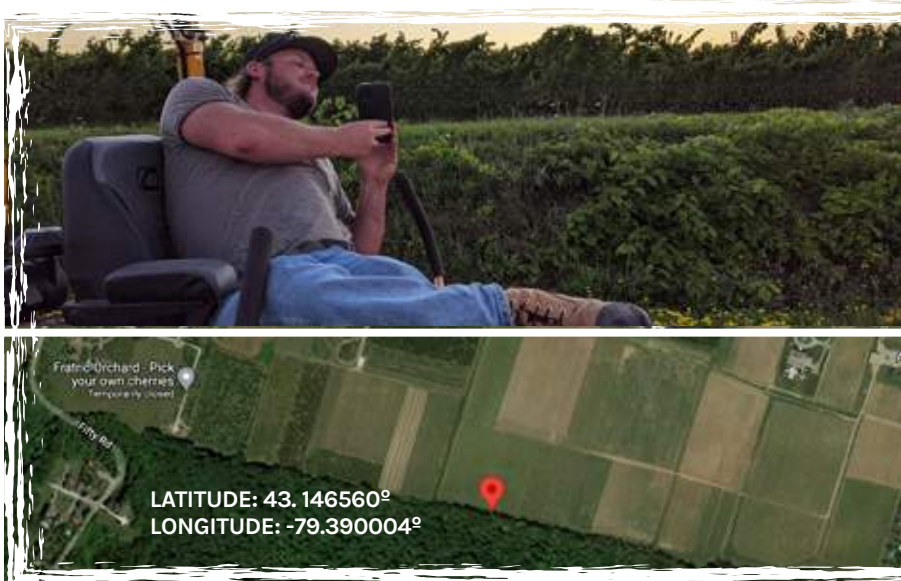
Now into the second generation, The Wismer family has been growing grapes on the Vineland Bench for 25+ years. They manage with great prowess - for themselves and others - some 300 acres. Craig Wismer, the leader/genius of it all, is a wine lover with a good palate, a man of passion and commitment, and he and I have been thick as thieves for years in our pursuit of understanding soils, terroirs, clones and viticulture. However, brothers Chris and Ken have brought nuance and precision to already excellently-run vineyards.

SOIL COMPOSITION

Reddish magnesium-oxide and dolomitic-limestone influenced clay soils with a solid silt component. "Loamy textures over reddish clay/loam till." Executive Summary: 'Reddish, shallow Dolostone.'

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 13,5% alc./vol; 2 g/l residual sugar, 175 cases made.



SUB-APPELLATION: Twenty-Mile Bench

DATE OF PLANTATION: 1999

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 5.5 KM

ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 133M

**METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP
TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD:** 6M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Both on the Vineland Bench and on the Jordan Bench*, the majority of vineyards are planted to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. We believe that the magic for Pinot Noir lies in both the altitude and distance from the lake and the soils, forming what could be called "Niagara's Grand Cru strip." We believe that the reddish brown soils of the lower Vineland bench bring a special iron-tinged, rusty wildness to what is essentially an excellent sub-appellation for making scented and nuanced Pinot Noir.

AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2014 AGEABILITY | Harvested on 1st October, 2014. / Just emerging from its shell as of this writing, will improve for 3-4 years to come, plateau and hold.

2015 AGEABILITY | Harvested on 20th September, 2015. Drinking beautifully now, will have the verve and energy to improve until 2023, potentially hold much longer.

2016 AGEABILITY | Harvested on 15th September, 2016. Drinking with great mouthfeel and complexity now, will become more complex perhaps peaking around 2025...and potentially hold much longer.

2017 AGEABILITY | Harvested on 4th October, 2017. Drinking beautifully now, lean, lithe and alluring, will have the energy to improve until 2028...and potentially hold much longer.

2018 AGEABILITY | Harvested on 20th September, 2018. The wine, this vintage remain an enigma for both Mary and I! 'Grand Vin' nose: delicious young, with boysenberry, menthol and anise spice not seen often out side of our beloved Willamette Valley in Oregon, the youthful generosity of black pepper-spiced, licorice-tinged, rusty-dusty fruit is already morphing into a sage, demonstrative wine that will continue to improve until... ??? let's say 2028, but shall ('fer shure') hold steady longer.

2019 AGEABILITY | Harvested on 29th September, 2019. Upon release, perhaps the best combination of transparency of terroir, and chalky, mineral full-fruitiness that we have yet seen. 2019 helps define this Lieu-dit, and even the Sub-App! The apparent delicacy belies the firm, rose petal florality, the iron-fist-in-a-velvet-glove that will come to define this wine, this vintage. Do not think of broaching this before 2023, if at all possible. Drink with glee from 2023-2030, even after which time it may surprise and continue to gain in subtlety and nuance.

2020 AGEABILITY | Harvested on 24th September, 2020. Still maturing steadily in barrel, the final selection of barrels for the 'Lieu-Dit' months away from being done. But there is lots of choice. These are deep wines of mature fine tannins, rounder fruit than usual, with greater precision than one might expect from a warmer season.

2021 AGEABILITY | Harvested on 1st October, 2021. Pressed, in barrel pre-malolactic, and showing incredible poise, depth, and great perfumed energy. I have rarely been this excited about a vintage just born.

**together grouped somewhat clumsily into the Twenty-Mile Bench Appellation.*

wismer-parke

WILD WEST END TWENTY-MILE BENCH BENCH VQA PINOT NOIR 2019

If I had to 'learn to love,' Wismer-Parke, then imagine my reaction the its Wild West End when first Craig Wismer proposed this 'Mystery Clone block. Of COURSE it captured my imagination! If Parke already had the wild bloody, 'bit your tongue' anise gaminess, imagine my surprise when the Wild West End had even more! Thrilling menthol-edged anise-scented red cherry fruit. complex, rich and long, this wine undoubtedly has a long and happy life ahead of it, in which us onlookers discover and rediscover the depth and yet forwardness of this amazing bit of Vineland Bench!

THE PARCEL

At 5,5 Km from the Lake at an altitude of 133 metres, from the sweet spot of the 20-Mile Bench on reddish magnesium and dolomitic-limestone clay soils with a solid silt component, 'Wismer-Parke' makes wines with a wild, rusty, anise-scented, iron-tinged nuance, yet a pretty, savoury mouthfeel. The Wild West End Pinot Noir shows the classic Vineland (as distinct from Jordan) combination of plush richness, tight minerality, and the wild, 'bloody' iron-grip of red soils. At once a hedonistic, ageable and yet perfumed Pinot Noir, Wismer-Parke's vocation would seem to be one of a certain firm, wild prettiness, finishing with a long, ferrous-meets-chalk minerality. Planted just south of Highway 8 just uphill on the Bench, on a well-drained slope on the east side of Victoria Street in Vineland, the Wismer-Parke site is arguably one of Niagara's 'Grand Crus' for Pinot Noir.

THE GROWER

Now into the second generation, The Wismer family has been growing grapes on the Vineland Bench for 25+ years. They manage with great prowess - for themselves and others - some 300 acres. Craig Wismer, the leader/genius of it all, is a wine lover with a good palate, a man of passion and commitment, and he and I have been thick as thieves for years in our pursuit of understanding soils, terroirs, clones and viticulture. However, brothers Chris and Ken have brought nuance and precision to already excellently-run vineyards.

SOIL COMPOSITION

Reddish magnesium-oxide and dolomitic-limestone influenced clay soils with a solid silt component. "Loamy textures over reddish clay/loam till." Executive Summary: 'Reddish, shallow Dolostone."

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 12,5% alc./vol; 2 g/l residual sugar, 50 cases made.

SUB-APPELLATION: Twenty-Mile Bench

DATE OF PLANTATION: 1999

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 5.5 KM

ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 133M

METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD: 6M

ELEVATION OF HIGHWAY 8 (FOR COMPARISON): 110M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Both on the Vineland Bench and on the Jordan Bench*, the majority of vineyards are planted to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. We believe that the magic for Pinot Noir lies in both the altitude and distance from the lake and the soils, forming what could be called "Niagara's Grand Cru strip." We believe that the reddish brown soils of the lower Vineland bench bring a special iron-tinged, rusty wildness to what is essentially an excellent sub-appellation for making scented and nuanced Pinot Noir.



AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2018 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 20th September, 2018. / the wine, this vintage remain an enigma for both Mary and I ! 'Grand Vin' nose: delicious young, with boysenberry, menthol and anise spice not seen often out side of our beloved Willamette Valley in Oregon, the youthful generosity of black pepper-spiced, licorice-tinged, rusty-dusty fruit is already morphing into a sage, demonstrative wine that will continue to improve until... ??? let's say 2028, but shall ('fer shure') hold steady longer.

2019 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 29th September, 2019. Upon release, perhaps the best combination of transparency of terroir, and chalky, mineral full-fruitiness that we have yet seen. 2019 helps define this Lieu-dit, and even the Sub-App! The apparent delicacy belies the firm, rose petal florality, the iron-fist-in-a-velvet-glove that will come to define this wine, this vintage. Do not think of broaching this before 2023, if at all possible. Drink with glee from 2023-2030, at which time it should continue to gain in subtlety and nuance.

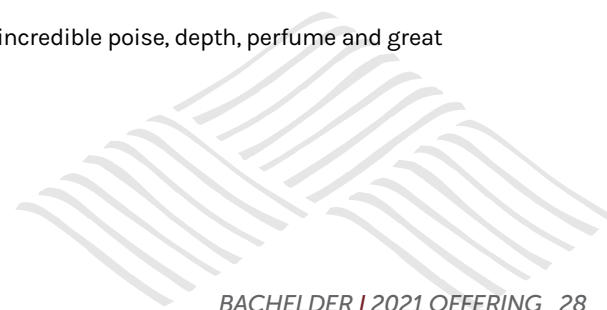
2020 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 24th September, 2020. / Still maturing steadily in barrel, the final selection of barrels for the 'Lieu-Dit' months away from being done. But there is lots of choice. These are deep wines of mature fine tannins, rounder fruit than usual, with greater precision than one might expect from a warmer season.

2021 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 1st October, 2021. / Pressed, in barrel pre-malolactic, and showing incredible poise, depth, perfume and great perfumed energy. I have rarely been this excited about a vintage just born.

**together grouped somewhat clumsily into the Twenty-Mile Bench Appellation.*





saunders

BEAMSVILLE BENCH VQA PINOT NOIR 2019

Ah! The conundrum that is Saunders Vineyard: Lake-effect and Bench-effect at once!!

THE PARCEL

Just 3,9km from the lake, but on the Bench at Mountainview road, Saunders is organically-grown* on clay, silt, sand & limestone. (*Certified by Ecocert.) In 2019 it was still 'younger vines' - the 'Bas' Pinot Noir block is in the lower part of the vineyard at a similar elevation to 'Hanck', 'Parke,' and the 'Le Clos Jordanne vineyards' over in Vineland and Jordan.

THE TASTING

It shouts Beamsville Bench: generous, deep, concentrated red and blue fruit, and a tight mineral quality. Floral violets and blueberries...strawberries and a hint of graphite, Saunders Pinot Noir finishes long and lean.

THE GROWER

The Saunders story is a captivating, touching one: One of the first pioneer viticulturalists on the Bench, visionary Warren Saunders **turned 100 this year!** Riding out from the Hamilton steel mills on his Sundays off, Warren dreamed of owning land and eventually established the family farm on the Beamsville Bench when he and Ivy were in their 40's... Their children - Anne-Marie, Royce & Leslie Saunders -always worked alongside their parents, and the Saunders farm is still run by Leslie, Anne-Marie and her husband Peter, with guidance, as always, from Warren himself! What the Saunders have achieved is humbling lesson that shows us what intent; commitment and constancy can achieve, and how it can influence and inspire us all. Santé, Warren!

SOIL COMPOSITION

Surprisingly, very little sand: Clay, silt,& limestone.

DETAILS

Fermentation with Indigenous yeasts; 12,5% alc./vol; 2 g/l residual sugar, 50 cases made.



SUB-APPELLATION: Beamsville Bench

DATE OF PLANTATION: 2015

DISTANCE FROM LAKE ONTARIO: 3.9 KM

ELEVATION AT TOP OF VINEYARD: 123M

METRES DIFFERENTIATION FROM TOP TO BOTTOM OF VINEYARD: 10M

WHY THIS MATTERS FROM A 'SENSE OF PLACE' PERSPECTIVE.

Beamsville is SO close to the Lake that it is at once "The Bench" and "Lake-influenced." An interesting conundrum, and one to toy with as you swirl the glass and think about how the curves of the bench draw close to the lake - and sometimes don't! This, along with varied soil compositions, elevations and planting regimes, makes for a fascinating study! "It IS Bench, but it IS closer to the Lake...and thus is warmer, fleshier Bench!"

AGEABILITY AS OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021

2017 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 2nd October, 2017. Young vines here: alluring, perfumed and beautiful now, should have the acid backbone to improve until 2025...potentially longer. We have none left in the cellar. Please feel free to write with a tasting note, it would be much appreciated!

2019 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 13th of October, 2019. The apparent delicacy belies the firm fruit from small-berried grape bunches. Interesting florality. Try in 2022, 2023, and try again from 2024-2028, even after which time it may surprise and continue to gain in subtlety and nuance.

2020 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 13th September, 2020. Still maturing steadily in barrel, the final selection of barrels from this site is months away from being done. These are deep wines of mature fine tannins, rounder fruit than usual.

2021 AGEABILITY

I Harvested on 7th October, 2021. Pressed, in barrel and is surprisingly well-coloured, with a lovely floral perfume and great verve. I have rarely been this excited about a Burgundian-style, vintage just born.

**together grouped somewhat clumsily into the Twenty-Mile Bench Appellation.*

THANK YOU

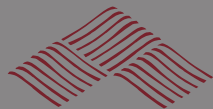
THANK-YOU!!! BACHELDER IS A TEENY-WEENY SMALL WINERY, AND WE CANNOT DO THIS WITHOUT A HUGE TEAM EFFORT!

- FIRSTLY- To all the growers (*see the individual wines for the deets*) who have made any and all of this possible!
- To the visionary Bill Redelmeier, our friend, who founded Southbrook and who, since 2010 has let us use their crush pad, sorting table, vats, muscles, brains and attention to detail to make these wines.
- To Ann Sperling, the amazingly-versatile winegrower of Southbrook, Sperling and Versado, for her help, advice and unwavering and influencing commitment to organics. Her current Southbrook Team: winemaker Casey Hogan, and cellar person *Emily Lacey... and all those past and present*
- To Ann's husband, our old buddy Peter Gamble, who has influenced everyone *in the Peninsula* whether or not they know it!
- To Ken Douglas, an influential wine taster, a great winemaker, an old friend and very wise man, who helped us set up the structure of Bachelder, and to Victor Muratori for continuing on and having enlightened ideas and problem-solving.
- To Eddie and Keith McMillan who keep all some 500 barrels (*two vintages worth*) in good nick... true coopers, true artisans and the *Peninsula could NOT function without you.*
- To the Cool Climate Chardonnay Celebration for bringing the world here, and showing us all that we had a place in it!
- To Brock University's CCOVI lab, who does the lab work for all of us who could never hope to staff and equip our own lab!
- For the investors in Bachelder, few but mighty in spirit, who have enabled this to happen. A special shout-out to Bob and Maureen Josefchak, our Guardian angels, and to Linda and Terry Higgins for all the help over the last decade.
- To the melting glaciers, without whom all this crazy differences in terroir (due to their induced massive waterflow) would not exist. Thank you for exposing the sleeping limestone!
- To the JOURNALISTS and BLOGGERS and VINFLUENCERS who vote with their words, videos, with their breath... and have chosen to see this new little region as worthy of support and attention and understanding in a big world where famous wines, vines and venerated terroirs are everywhere.
- To VQA and WMAO and the GRAPE GROWERS who are doing their level best everyday to make this region Stand Tall, and to make sure the best of the world come to visit, or see our wines on their own turf!
- To Stuart Riemer and the incredible team at Quarry Ridge who do logistics for the entire peninsula – Georgian Bay AND Prince Edward County!
- To Kim Bucknall and her fulfillment team at the warehouse who along with our bookkeeper, Lillian Coates who get all the orders out to the right places, and to Hunter Bottling – Glen and Randy and the boys who tirelessly and with great spirit bottle nearly every top wine in the Peninsula!
- To Elena Winestains, Karen Black, Joanna Muratori and Shawn King who have helped us with every release, with the Web, with social media, photography and...
- To Steven Campbell, ex-of Lifford, Charles Goyer and Daniel Lavergne of La Céleste au Québec, And David Gleave of Liberty in the UK... What a partnership!
- To KARL and SYLVIA Kaiser, who understood grapes, terroir and place and believed and cooked and entertained and fought and persevered and made it happen for this region. With Donald Ziraldo and Donald Triggs and Allan Jackson also, without whom vineyards like Lowrey and Montague would not exist, without whom noble projects like Alliance and the Clos Jordanne would not exist, and without whom, Mary and I would still be in Oregon or Burgundy.
- To Mary, my dear sweet wife and partner in life and love, and our two girls Esmée and Violette, without whom...:
"Nothing from *Nothing* leaves Nuthin' " (*Billy Preston*)

I love and venerate the amazing wines and regions of greater Burgundy and all those of the Old World. Making wine over there is SO exciting, real, historic, inspiring – you feel so alive and privileged to participate. Those amazing terroirs – where the grapes evolved in situ – are my favourite wines on the planet.

HOWEVER, there is NOTHING more exciting and satisfying in the wine world than discovering new terroirs: it is never perfect, but WHAT a journey!

Thomas Bachelder
Toussaint 2021



BACHELDER

MAPPING NIAGARA. ONE VINEYARD AT A TIME.