

# RUTHERFORD DUST SOCIETY



*"It takes Rutherford Dust to grow Great Cabernet."*  
—André Tchelistcheff

E - NEWSLETTER — DECEMBER 2009

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Rutherford's Napa River Restoration Project Now Underway  
*Go to story...*
- Rutherford Retraced: Boom, Bust and Survival  
*Go to story..*
- Scott McLeod of Rubicon Estate Named "Winemaker of the Year" by *Wine Enthusiast*  
*Go to story...*
- Long Meadow Ranch Winery & Farmstead Opens This Winter in St. Helena  
*Go to story...*
- Staglin Family Vineyard Nears Completion of Restoration of 1868 Manley House  
*Go to story...*
- Peju Winery Earns Top Reviews from *Wine Enthusiast*  
*Go to story...*
- El Molino Harvest is Over; Time to Taste Library Wines  
*Go to story...*

## RUTHERFORD'S NAPA RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT NOW UNDERWAY

The Phase 1 project on the east bank of the river, from the Zinfandel Lane bridge through the Guggenime, Quintessa, and Carpy-Connolly properties, has been essentially completed (see "before" photo, top right, and "after" photo, below right, which show the terracing/shaping work done along the riverbank).

We faced many challenges in keeping all aspects of the project on track, given the state budget crisis and holdups from agency partners. We were lucky



that some of our state funding was “backfilled” by Federal stimulus funding. The early rain was a setback in terms of getting all of the habitat structures in place. In-stream fish structures scheduled for installation this season will be postponed until next year, when they will go in as part of the construction of the west bank of Phase 1 (Frog’s Leap and Sutter Home/Trincher Family Estates).

Creation of the final design plans is currently underway for Phase 2, from the end of Phase 1 downstream to the Rutherford Cross Road. Phase 2 construction is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2010 on the Caymus and Carpy-Connolly properties. The timing of construction for the remaining Phase 2 properties is contingent upon receipt of funding from our pending grant applications. The target date to begin construction on Honig, Round Pond, Emmolo, and Mee is Spring 2011.



As a result of the first annual maintenance survey, the river maintenance team picked up lots of trash (mostly tires, some more exotic items) and is busy treating a number of Pierce’s disease host plant invasions and in-stream wood accumulations.

For more information visit [www.rutherforddust.org](http://www.rutherforddust.org).

[Back to Top](#)

## **RUTHERFORD RETRACED: BOOM, BUST AND SURVIVAL**

By Rue Ziegler, Ph.D. California Heritage Research Group, LLC

Economic turmoil is nothing new. In the years before and after Prohibition, Rutherford’s historic winegrowers experienced heady fortunes and calamitous failures through dramatic boom and bust cycles.



In the wine boom decade of the 1880’s, wealthy San Francisco capitalists were attracted to Napa Valley’s burgeoning wine industry, and invested in large vineyard estates. By the end of the decade tiny Rutherford would have 66 grape growers, many of whom were urbanite “landed gentry.” They included Gustave Niebaum, founder of the highly profitable Alaska Commercial Co., who bought more than 1,000 acres in Rutherford and greatly expanded his fortune as a wine baron. In 1887 he completed his chateau-style winery, Inglenook (left), destined to become one of the great names of California wine.

Niebaum’s contemporary, Joseph Burr Atkinson, lived on the opposite side of the county road. A wealthy clothier in San Francisco, Atkinson partnered with state senator Seneca Ewer in 1885 to build a highly successful winery that would one day rival Inglenook. But by 1893 phylloxera devastated Atkinson’s vines; an overlapping economic depression led to his bankruptcy six years later. More than half of Rutherford’s winegrowers would suffer a similar fate.

Another bust cycle would follow with the onset of Prohibition in 1920. But one notable viticulturalist would prosper: Georges de Latour, who had purchased the Ewer and Atkinson winery in 1915, thrived by selling sacramental wine to the Roman Catholic Church.

The last years of Prohibition coincided with the Great Depression, and the value of Napa

vineyards plummeted from \$3 million in 1923 to one-half million in 1934. Four years later, de Latour would hire André Tchelistcheff as his winemaker, and the former Ewer and Atkinson winery would become legendary as Beaulieu Vineyard.

To find out more about California Heritage Research Group visit [www.caheritageresearch.com](http://www.caheritageresearch.com).

[Back to Top](#)

## **SCOTT MCLEOD OF RUBICON ESTATE NAMED “WINEMAKER OF THE YEAR” BY *WINE ENTHUSIAST***



*Wine Enthusiast* magazine has named Scott McLeod their 2009 Winemaker of the Year.

“Now in his 20th year overseeing production of Francis Ford Coppola’s Napa estate,” said the magazine, “McLeod has pushed the flagship Rubicon bottling into the top ranks of Napa Valley Bordeaux blends. Beyond his involvement with Rubicon, McLeod is also a stalwart promoter of the Rutherford AVA in its own right. For presiding over one of Napa Valley’s greatest and most glamorous wines, for accomplishing as much as he has at the relatively young age of 47, and for implementing the vision of his demandingly creative boss, Francis Ford Coppola, Scott McLeod is *Wine Enthusiast*’s Winemaker of the Year.”

Find out more about Scott McLeod and Rubicon Estate at [www.rubiconestate.com](http://www.rubiconestate.com).

[Back to Top](#)

## **LONG MEADOW RANCH WINERY & FARMSTEAD OPENS THIS WINTER IN ST. HELENA**

This winter brings the much-anticipated opening of Long Meadow Ranch Winery & Farmstead, an innovative restaurant and tasting room collective located on Main Street in St. Helena.

Proprietors Ted, Laddie and Chris Hall, executive chef/partner Sheamus Feeley (formerly of the Rutherford Grill), and Kevin Twohey head up the project, which also features a wine and olive oil tasting room, demonstration and aroma gardens, and a full organic nursery. Long Meadow Ranch Winery & Farmstead will offer an array of experiences for lovers of local food and wines, including fresh farm-to-table dining, wine and olive oil tasting, and engaging educational experiences that underscore Long Meadow Ranch’s motto of “Excellence through Responsible Farming.”



Farmstead restaurant will serve American farmhouse cooking with seasonal, ingredient-driven menu items, à la carte and family style. Long Meadow Ranch will supply its organic and sustainably produced grass-fed beef, eggs, heirloom fruits and vegetables, chickens, handcrafted extra virgin olive oil, honey and more—while sustainable producers in Napa and Sonoma will supply additional ingredients.

Long Meadow Ranch’s award-winning wines and olive oils will also receive star billing in the adjacent tasting room, set in the historic, newly restored Logan/Ives house. The tasting room will be open to the public, and also offers two private rooms for intimate gatherings, plus a kitchen for cooking classes.

The ambiance at Long Meadow Ranch Winery & Farmstead is casual and relaxed, with an open kitchen and an outdoor fireplace, as well as dining and full bars both inside and out.

A local gathering place, Napa Valley destination, and the latest chapter in the Hall family story, Long Meadow Ranch Winery & Farmstead will be open for lunch and dinner seven days a week. Find out more at [www.longmeadowranch.com](http://www.longmeadowranch.com).

[Back to Top](#)

## STAGLIN FAMILY VINEYARD NEARS COMPLETION OF RESTORATION OF 1868 MANLEY HOUSE

Staglin Family Vineyard is heading into the final months of the restoration of the historic Manley house. Built in 1868, it was sold to a third party in the 1960s, when André Tchelistchef purchased the vineyard for Beaulieu Vineyard. In 2007 the Staglins were able to buy it back and, after the usual permit hassles, began the restoration in April 2008. The



project involved moving the house so they could completely rebuild a newly expanded foundation that provides a porch surrounding the structure.



The steep grades and soils on the property (great for cabernet, bad for construction) required significant retaining walls, drainage, and other infrastructure. The good news is it's scheduled to be finished before Christmas and will become the hospitality center. Staglin Family offices have already been moved from Yountville to the expanded and renovated old offices that were next to the Manley house. Stay tuned for news of the grand opening celebration, probably in the spring, that will also celebrate the Staglins' 25th year in the wine business at [www.staglinfamily.com](http://www.staglinfamily.com)

[Back to Top](#)

## PEJU EARNS TOP REVIEWS FROM *WINE ENTHUSIAST*

Peju Winery, family owned and operated for more than 25 years, received 90-plus scores from *Wine Enthusiast* magazine on six of their current Napa Valley wines, including five 2006 red wines and one 2008 white wine. The reviews will be published in the December 1, 2009 issue.

The Peju 2006 Fifty/Fifty, a blend of 50% Merlot and 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, received 94 points, the 2006 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon received 93, the 2006 Napa Valley Cabernet Franc received 91, the 2006 Napa Valley Merlot received 91, the 2006 Napa Valley Zinfandel received 90, and the 2008 Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc received 90 points.

The 2006 red wines mark the first vintage that Peju Winemaker Sara Fowler has overseen from vine to bottle. All of the featured Peju wines were produced using estate-grown fruit sourced from the family's certified organic Rutherford Vineyard and sustainably farmed Persephone Vineyard. For more information visit [www.peju.com](http://www.peju.com)



[Back to Top](#)

## **EL MOLINO HARVEST IS OVER; TIME TO TASTE LIBRARY WINES**



Harvest has finally wound down at El Molino. The Chardonnay finished fermentation during the first week of October, and the last tank of Pinot Noir was pressed a week later, on October 14.

One of the great perks of having a wine library of vintages dating back to the inaugural releases, the 1987 El Molino Pinot Noir and 1988 El Molino Chardonnay, is that on occasion one gets to sample a bottle or two that have been cellaring since bottling. This time of year, with Christmas and end-of-year festivities near, is a great time to open older bottles that you may have in your cellar, such as our 1995 and 1997 Pinot Noir and 1996 and 1998 Chardonnay. It is a testament to the Rutherford vineyards and the winemaking philosophy that the older vintages continue to show well into their thirteenth year. For tasting notes on those wines, visit

[www.elmolinowinery.com](http://www.elmolinowinery.com).

[Back to Top](#)