

OntarioWineReview

A bi-weekly newsletter dedicated to helping you discover Ontario's best Wines and Wineries. Enjoyment comes from understanding - Passion comes from understanding more.



OntarioWineReview Newsletter – 148
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OntarioWineReview: *Goodbye Larry*

So here we are, the last newsletter of the year, a place where I usually rant about what's to come and those things that have been on my mind these past 12 months. A place where best of, worst of and other annually compiled lists are placed. A place where I talk about those little dichotomies of the past year, basically things that make you go `hmm`. But this year I feel compelled to go in a different direction, I'm going to introduce you to somebody you'll never get to meet because Larry Paterson was taken from us far too soon.

To a guy like me Larry was invaluable, he was the keeper of records, the asker of questions, the one who had the answers and if not he knew how to get them. He was the constant pessimist, yet the forever optimist.

When I was writing my LCBO article ([LCBO Monopoly](#)) for Ottawa Life magazine he was there with encouragement and helped by feeding me information, pointing me in the right direction and to putting me in touch with the right people. There was many a morning we would spend on the phone sharing thoughts and ideas about the LCBO and its affect on the Ontario wine industry. He put me in touch with people like David Menzies, Ian Blue, Arnold Schwisberg, and countless others who had stories to tell; they all helped paint a picture of a corrupt organization with a sense of entitlement.

Larry was not just opposed to the LCBO because he had worked there for 30 years and had seen the back door double-dealings (he was often painted as the disgruntled worker), but more so, he was opposed to the lack of access to market Ontario wineries had, often counting the number of wines being offered through Vintages and the Classic catalogue, and the woeful lack of Ontario representation in those pages. He had been kicked out of many an LCBO store for taking pictures of bad product placement of Ontario wine and for calculating the percentage of space Ontario wines had vs the wines from the rest of the world. He was also angered by the inequality between the haves (what Larry would call: `the big boys` - `CiC producers` - `blenders`) and the small wineries. Together with friend Jim Warren they created the Ontario Viticulture Association (OVA), not because they wanted to but because they saw a need to. The Wine Council of Ontario was not speaking for the small wineries, they're a government organization, after all, and they'll follow in step with government rules and regulations. The OVA stood up, stood out and shouted loud for the little guy - and Larry was the driving force behind it.

Larry was also a champion for the little guy and the little guys knew it. He could open doors to a closed community. When I was writing about fruit wineries (a much maligned, overlooked and cynical segment of the Ontario wine industry) for Tidings Magazine, he was the one who sent out an introductory email telling those folks that "Mike is one of us, one of the good guys, so talk to him."

Larry and I had some early morning phone conversations (before the sun was even up) that were tinged with his unique blend of cynicism, optimism and realism; a man who said what he thought and be damned the consequences': "Quote me, " he would say, "I don't care." Friend to the industry, foe (and thorn) to the establishment, nobody fought harder for the wine of his home province, yet took so little by way of credit or accolades for what he was doing.

Larry had all the data and all the statistics, he was a numbers guy ("an accountant in a past life" he would say) ... he crunched many a number, poured over many a document and would spend hours going through them with you to make sure you understood them too. The one he was most proud of cracking was the new content rules, which he said benefited the Cellared in Canada makers, but on paper appeared to support the industry's grape growers: "Why do you think the big boys never opposed it," he said to me, "because their numbers guys went over it too; but it's way to complicated to explain." He must have spent an hour on the phone with me that morning going over the numbers and when it was all over I said, "How can I write that in a page long article?" "You can't." He answered sadly, "Not with any real understanding, you'd lose people with the math, it was designed to confuse."

As I think ahead two things will be forever changed for me: the Ontario Wine Awards (OWA) and the Canadian Wine Championships (CWC) - my two guaranteed face-to-face meetings with Larry each year. Oh sure, I may bump into him here and there, but at these two events he was a mainstay. At the OWA he was always good for a new issue, something that was coming down the pipe, he had a way of making me think and riling me up all at the same time; he'd plant the seed, feed you enough details and off you would go to research the rest ... though Larry was good for the rest of the story too. At the CWC he was always sparing with a government representative over what the government was or was not doing for the Ontario industry; they were often seen bickering with each other, but there was also a mutual respect and camaraderie to the whole battle. Larry had that way about him, he'd piss you off but he'd make you think and but he would always make his point. He'd rile you up, but for all the right reasons. Many of his detractors wished he would just shut up and go away.

On November 29 his voice was finally silenced as he succumbed to lung disease, and we are all the poorer for it. We who knew him were richer for the experience and lucky for his friendship. He will be missed by many. Who will be there to keep the big guys in line, point out their foibles and above all try to keep them honest - though even Larry never thought that possible, though it was worth the try. So although it's too late to get to know Larry Paterson personally, take a few minutes to read up on him, learn about him and what he meant to many in the industry - you'll realize that we all have truly lost a friend:

Tony Aspler: <http://www.tonyaspler.com/pub/articleview.asp?id=1349&s=17>

Wine this Week: <http://www.winethisweek.ca/larry.html>

Rick Van Sickle: <http://winesinniagara.com/2010/11/little-fat-wino-fondly-remembered/>

Deacon Dr. Fresh: <http://deaconwinelist.blogspot.com/2010/12/rest-in-peace-larry-paterson.html>

WWCC: <http://winewriterscircle.ca/news/23-farewell-larry-paterson>

If I were giving Larry's eulogy, and had to encapsulate Larry in one story, this would be mine: I remember him telling me about acquiring some much sought after and coveted juice from a producer who rarely sold his grapes. He got it home in his 10 liter pail and the handle broke as he was taking it downstairs, spilling the juice down the stairs and onto the basement floor. Quick thinking Larry grabbed his ShopVac and vacuumed up what he could salvage, he then proceeded to make the wine. That was his dedication and commitment to following thru.

Now I can't guarantee that Larry went to heaven, if the LCBO had their way he didn't, but I can guarantee you that by now he's found fault with the system and is already seeking ways to change it or access their Freedom of Information Act to prove it. Good luck Larry; you'll be missed here on earth, wherever you are now it'll be better for having you.



Grape Guy's Picks of the Bunch: *Three Reviews and the Annual Must Pile*

Lailey Vineyard 2009 Riesling - \$18.00 (W)

www.laileyvineyard.com

'09 Rieslings were loaded with acidity, so the trick was to balance that high acidity with sweetness and fruit. Winemaker Derek Barnett has made some pretty good Rieslings over the years but I believe this just might be one of his best. What follows will seem simple, but it's hard to get the feeling this wine brings to the mouth without pouring you a sample (in other words, after you read this get thee hence to Lailey and try). A nose ripe with peach and apple and a palate full of green apple acidity balanced with sweet peach flavour. Comes across quite dry and mouth-wateringly good. The best part is that long finish and with only 11.5% alcohol it's hardly taxing on the palate. Price: \$18.00 - Rating: **** 1/2

Sprucewood Shores 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve - \$24.95 (W)

www.sprucewoodshores.com

There are some wines that you rate based on their future potential and not on their drink now status - this Sprucewood Reserve Cabernet is one of those wines. This is from the big 2007 vintage where riper than usual fruit was the norm. 19 months in a mix of French and Hungarian wood have given this wine quite a hefty mouthfeel but there's balance in this bottle and nice texture across the tongue. Unfortunately, the fruit hasn't fully integrated with the wood but it will in the coming years, lie this one down for a year or two then bring it out for company around the BBQ. I would suggest decanting, that should help to get that wood and dark fruit grit melded together nicely. Price: \$24.95 - Rating: **** 1/2

Colaneri 2008 "Pensiere" Merlot - \$29.95 (W)

www.colaneriwines.com

Many people are asking me, "now that you live in Niagara have you tried that new winery's wines." That's a tough question to answer since it seems a new winery is opening every month down here - but many are talking about Colaneri - the place you can see on your left as you drive along York Road toward Chateau des Charmes. The answer is "yes" and now I'm telling you about their best wine. This '08 Merlot saw 15 months of new French oak which gives it weight and structure. The nose is blueberry and blackened raspberry along with smoke and vanilla; the palate echoes many of these aromas as flavours: smoked vanilla, blueberry, raspberry and cocoa powder-sprinkled-blueberries on the long finish. Smooth and very enjoyable. Price: \$29.95 - Rating: **** 1/2

The must pile ...

Over the past year I tasted a lot of wine, these are reviews that should have made the newsletter but didn't because of space limitations:

[Chateau des Charmes 2007 St. David's Cabernet Sauvignon](#)

[Chateau des Charmes 2007 St. David's Merlot](#)

[Chateau des Charmes 2009 Generation 7 Red](#) and [White](#)

[Coyote's Run 2008 Red Paw Pinot Noir](#)

[Harwood Estate 2008 Pinot Gris](#)

[Harwood Estates 2009 Just Desserts](#)

[Kacaba Vineyards 2007 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon](#)

[Lailey Vineyard 2007 Canadian Oak Meritage](#)

[Lailey Vineyard 2008 Select Late Harvest Riesling](#)

[Maleta Estate Winery 2007 VIEW Old Vines Sparkling Riesling](#)

[Norman Hardie Wine 2009 Riesling](#)

[Peller Estates 2007 Private Reserve Merlot](#)
[Pillitteri Estates 2007 Riesling Icewine](#)
[Rosehall Run 2008 Cuvee County Chardonnay](#)
[Rosehall Run 2008 Sullyzwicker White](#)
[Rosehall Run 2009 Chardonnay Musque](#)
[Stoney Ridge 2008 Cabernet Merlot](#)
[Strewn 2007 Cabernet Franc](#)
[Strewn 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon](#)
[Tawse 2008 Quarry Road Chardonnay](#)

Availability legend: W (Winery) – L (LCBO/Vintages) – WTH (Winery to Home).



Weekly Wine Notes and More: *Sparkling Wines all the way*
A new Ontario wine is reviewed every Tuesday ... take two minutes to listen to the [Podcast](#) or read the tasting notes on the [Blog](#).

[Weekly Wine Notes](#) (added to the Blog and Pod in the past few weeks):

November 26, 2010 – Coffin Ridge 2009 Sparkling Pear ([LISTEN](#))
December 3, 2010 – Palatine Hills 2007 Juliette Blanc de Blancs ([LISTEN](#))

Interviews on CHOK-Sarnia:

[November 4, 2010](#)
[November 11, 2010](#)

[On the Road with the Grape Guy:](#)

Trips, tours and tastings – join me as I review the highs, and sometimes, the lows
[Taste the Season - Niagara-on-the-Lake 2010](#)
[South African Wine Society Holiday Dinner](#)

[Lost and Found \(blog\)](#)

Wines that got "lost" in my cellar - some are Treasures others Trash ... Find out what happened
[Henry of Pelham 2003 Reserve Riesling](#)

[Taste it Again Grape Guy \(blog\)](#)

Find out what has happened to some of my favourites over the years
[Coyote's Run 2005 Cabernet Franc](#)
[Jackson-Triggs 2006 Proprietors' Grand Reserve White Meritage](#)
[Jackson-Triggs 2004 Late Harvest Riesling](#)

[What I'm drinking Tonight \(blog\)](#)

When it's not an Ontario wine, here's what I'm pulling out of the cellar
[6 New Posts added over the last two weeks](#)
Including: 2 Zinfandels, Italian and South African Wines

[Vintages Release \(blog\)](#)

[Next Release Report will be for December 11, 2010](#)

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Wine Event Spotlight: *Tis the Season for Open Houses, Fa-La-La-La-La*

I can't list them all but check you favourite wineries websites to find out what's going on, if you can't find something to do, you just aren't look hard enough. Happy Holidays.

OntarioWineReview's bi-weekly newsletter is devoted to the love, enjoyment and promotion of the wines of Ontario and the wineries that make them.



What can the Grape Guy do for you ... Michael Pinkus (Grape Guy) provides a variety of wine related services that you might be interested in taking advantage of: he gives lectures, leads seminars, conducts tastings, sets up tours; consults, selects and judges. He also gives interviews, broadcasts, podcasts and writes. [Contact the Grape Guy if you require any of these services or have any questions.](#)



Psst, Pass It On ... keep the good wine flowing. Forward this newsletter to your mom in Mimico your uncle in Uxbridge, your great aunt in Grand Bend or any other family member or loved one that you know needs good wine advice.



Socially Speaking ...

Follow Michael Pinkus, the Grape Guy's (almost) daily **Tweets** at <http://twitter.com/TheGrapeGuy>. You can become a friend on **facebook**: <http://www.facebook.com/?ref=home#!/mepinkus>.

"Linked In" folks can find Michael at <http://ca.linkedin.com/pub/michael-pinkus/14/704/4b8>

To contact us with feedback, article ideas, comments, concerns or questions – email michael@ontariowinereview.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

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