



Earl Fuhrman, of the Bainbridge Fire Company, prepares barrels of grape stomping at Nissley Vineyards.

Wine Fest next Saturday

BAINBRIDGE — The Bainbridge-Maytown Rotary Club and the Haldeman Mansion Preservation Society will hold a fun-packed September Wine Fest at the winery of Nissley Vineyards, Rt 1, Bainbridge, next Saturday.

One highlight of the festivities will be the hot air balloon rides and an ascension by balloonist Dick Hess over the rolling hills of western Lancaster County to provide an aerial view of the vineyards planted by Dick Nissley in 1974.

The Do-Pas-So Club of Lancaster will delight the on-ground audience in a square dancing exhibition with George A. Varney Jr. as caller.

Then the mood will switch to "preservation hall" style music by Al Bethel's Creole Kings Dixieland Jazz Band. You may settle back and just listen or get into the swing on the open air patio.

To keep tiny folks occupied, Bainbridge's most popular clown and her wee assistant clown will be on hand. There is plenty of space for children to romp and frolic.

Also there will be specially prepared beef stew plus cheese plates, french rolls and dessert for those who want dinner or just a snack.

Wine is the beverage of the evening with 20 or more Nissley vintage wines from which to choose such as Aurora, Keystone Kiss, and Naughty Marietta.

Although the September Wine Fest is a new project for each of the benefit groups, they have had previous experience in coordinating fund raising events. In the fall of 1979 and again in 1980, they jointly organized the Bainbridge-Maytown Candlelight Tour of Homes which drew over 1500 people to the two small towns. Nissley Vineyards had participated as one of the tour spots en route from Bainbridge to Maytown.

This time, Nissley Vineyards will be the site for the festival. To be assured a comfortable seat on the lawn, please bring a chair or blanket. The festivities will be held from 4-8 p.m. and there will be a \$1 admission charge. Proceeds from the festival will be shared by the Haldeman Society for continuing

mansion renovations and by the Rotary Club for its civic projects.

To reach the winery, turn off Route 441 at Wickersham Road (halfway between Columbia and Middletown) and follow the signs. The rain date is Sunday, September 27.



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Pennsylvania wines are winners

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania's 300-year wine history has been as varied as today's fine Pennsylvania wines. Beginning in 1683, when William Penn brought French and Spanish grape vines to Philadelphia, the state's wine industry has branched across the state, dwindled under Prohibition, and now is undergoing a renaissance.

Penn attempted to establish Pennsylvania's first wine industry. He predicted the consequences of his imported vines "will be as good as any European countries of the same latitude."

But Penn's vines fell prey to disease and pests. A few years later, the colony's interpreter, Conrad Weiser, was more successful, and during the 1750's the governor of Virginia regularly sipped the fruits of Weiser's Riesling vines.

Shortly before the American Revolution, this country's first domestic wine grape, the Alexander, was found growing on the banks of the Schuylkill River near Philadelphia. Named for Lieutenant Governor John Penn's gardener, John Alexander, this hardy variety, along with imported Catawbas, was planted in Penn's garden.

In 1793, a Frenchman named Peter Legaux founded a company to cultivate grapes at Spring Mill on the Schuylkill River near Philadelphia. The venture flourished for a time, but soon fell prey to the cold winters and vine pests. Only the Alexander survived.

Thomas Eichelberger, using the hardy Alexander, became America's first commercial vintner in 1818. The York area German immigrant was the center of grape culture for many years.

Six years later, the Harmony Society, a religious sect, established vineyards, a winery and distillery at Economy near Pittsburgh, the first successful vineyard operation west of the Alleghenies. The Economy Wine Vaults led the state in production of wine for over 76 years, before falling victim to its own virtue. The Harmonists practiced celibacy, and the society dissolved, with shops and wine vaults preserved by the commonwealth as historical landmarks.

The South Shore Wine Company brought the vintner's art to the northwest corner of the state in 1863. The area around North East saw Concord grapes replacing the wine varieties within 30 years. Dr. Charles Welch had introduced grape juice at the Chicago World's Fair; demand led the Welch Company to expand grape acreage and establish the world's biggest grape juice plant at North East. Grapes have been Erie County's chief farm crop ever since.

The onset of Prohibition closed the doors of Pennsylvania's commercial wineries and the art became a neighborhood cottage industry. The state emerged from Prohibition with a tightly controlled distribution system for alcoholic beverages including wines.

Pennsylvania had been the birthplace of U.S. commercial wine production, but the industry lay dormant for thirty years until the bonding of the Conestoga Vineyard in 1963. A year later, this small vineyard was distributing wine through the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board. Soon many of the state's leading restaurants learned of the Pennsylvania wine and placed orders. Conestoga wines were soon added to the wine lists of these three-star establishments. With this success in hand, it wasn't long until steps were taken to encourage wine-grape growers to build and bond new wineries.

The Limited Winery Act, passed in 1968, enabled wineries to sell directly to the public, the Liquor Control Board and hotel-restaurants. Under the Act, wineries could produce up to 100,000 gallons of wine each year using only Pennsylvania-grown grapes.

Today, Pennsylvania boasts 27 limited wineries, which produce over 250,000 gallons each year. This output places the state high on the list in national wine production.

While some wineries are using apples, cherries, strawberries and other fruits for wines, the bulk of Pennsylvania wines are still made from the 9,500 tons of wine grapes grown annually in the Commonwealth. Pennsylvania grown French hybrids provide a hardy vine and full bodied wines;

Lambrusca and Vinifera grapes are also in common use.

Each year the wineries and wines of Pennsylvania are growing better, gaining attention and recognition far beyond the state's borders. At the 1980 Wineries Unlimited Convention, Pennsylvania wines captured 27 awards including three gold medals.

If you haven't yet sampled Pennsylvania wines, you'll find they're exceptional. Ranging from dry wines to sweet fruity wines, they are reasonably priced — between \$3.40 and \$5 per bottle.

If you live anywhere in Pennsylvania — or if you're coming in for a vacation — you're close to a winery. The Pennsylvania Wine Association has prepared a guide to help you plan a visit, a long weekend or a day trip.

Pennsylvania wineries range from the modern to the charming and quaint. Whichever winery you visit, you'll find a friend. Stroll through the vineyards and learn how our wine is made. Taste the many award-winning Pennsylvania wines. Write for a free brochure and enjoy Pennsylvania wine country!

(The address for the Pennsylvania Wine Association is 11815 East Lake Road, North East, PA 16428, or call 814-725-8695.)

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