

## Charles Krug unveils its \$44.5 million Renaissance

**ST. HELENA, Calif.** — Historic Charles Krug Winery (known as the birthplace of the Napa Valley wine industry) unveiled its resplendently restored 19th-century carriage house on September 27. The structure was built by the winery founder 127 years ago and was made ready for 21st-century duties by current-day owner Peter Mondavi and sons Marc and Pete Jr. The Mondavis, including the matriarch, Blanche, hosted a grand party for friends, clients and family, including the Oakville Mondavis: Margrit Biever Mondavi and her late husband Robert's children Michael, Marcia and Tim.

With little fanfare, the St. Helena Mondavis have been quietly bringing their hallowed winery into ultramodern shape for the past three years, investing \$36 million to replant 405 acres (many of which are organic) and to build a dual winery that will handle both the CK Mondavi and the premium Charles Krug-Peter Mondavi Family labels. The icing: \$8.5 million to shore and polish up the distinctive edifices that Krug himself built.

Charles Krug Winery's historic carriage house was re-dedicated September 27 as part of an \$8.5 million restoration project.

"Time had taken its toll on the buildings, and they were badly in need of repair and seismic retrofitting," Pete Jr. noted. "We reclaimed and numbered every piece of the usable wood and kept all the original glass and moldings." To repurpose the original redwood fermentation and aging tanks, the 3-inch-thick, 100-year-old heart red-

wood staves were remilled to transform the once-plain carriage house interior into a cathedral-inspired, Victorian gem. The five-story cellar, built in 1872, was also part of the sweeping restoration project.

As part of the festivities, Peter Sr., 94, was surprised by his sons with a life-size, bronze bust, sculpted by Ed Voelkel. "Wow" was the first word

uttered by the spirited Napa Valley icon. He went on to reminisce about his famous father, Cesare, mother, Rosa, and late brother Robert, recounting that in 1943 they together bought the winery and 147 acres for \$75,000. "It was during the war, and I was in the service, so [the first refurbishment] was all done under the direction of my brother and pop. I give credit to

my brother, Bob; he somehow managed to find the materials to rebuild the old winery," he said.

His sister-in-law Margrit also had her start at Krug. "It's wonderful to see all of this," she said. "It's a beautiful miracle of family and hope." In a toast to his uncle, Tim shouted "*cent' anni*," cheering him toward his 100th birthday, and observed, "I'm truly happy for my cousins; [the restoration] just couldn't have been done better."

— *John Intardonato*

