

Family turns wine into hope

by: SCOTT CHERRY World Scene Writer

Monday, December 20, 2010

12/20/2010 7:06:22 AM

Just as the Bump family was on the cusp of transforming its winemaking business into a Bordeaux-style boutique Napa Valley winery, tragedy struck.

"Mom was diagnosed with ovarian cancer at the end of the year in 2004, and that changed everything," said the Bumps' daughter, Tricia Bump-Davis. "After that, the focus was on her health. Wine wasn't our first priority."

Prior to that, Linda and Larry Bump had invested, along with others, in Crichton Hall, which specialized in chardonnay, a white-wine grape.

It was determined in 2000 the vineyards needed to be replanted, and when the decision was made to go with traditional Bordeaux red grape varieties - cabernet sauvignon, petit verdot, cabernet franc and merlot - the Bumps were the only investors willing to put up extra money for the transition, Bump-Davis said.

"In 2001, Mom and Dad bought out the other investors, and in 2003 they bought the winery from the Crichton family," Bump-Davis said by phone from California. "They changed the name to Darms Lane in 2005."

Linda Bump lost her fight with cancer in March 2007, when Darms Lane was producing fewer than 400 cases of wine - mostly cabernet sauvignon - a year.

Bump-Davis, who today is general manager of Darms Lane, said the winery has two vineyard areas, one on a steep hillside and the other on the valley floor in the Oak Knoll area of Napa Valley.

After Linda Bump's death, the hillside area was named Linda's Hillside Vineyard and the valley named Bonpasse Vineyard, the original French variation of the Bump name.

The first cabernet sauvignon from Linda's Hillside Vineyard was the 2007 vintage, just released in September. Only 150 cases were made, compared to 500 from the Bonpasse Vineyard, both small numbers compared to many wineries.

Larry Bump, who still resides in Tulsa, decided to donate \$25 from every bottle of Linda's Hillside Vineyard cab to the Ovarian Cancer Research Fund.

"After Mom passed away, Dad started donating and asking for donations to the Ovarian Cancer Research Fund," Bump-Davis said. "Donating money from the wine is an extension of that."

Locally, Old Village Wine & Spirits, 1327 E. 41st St., is participating in the charity by selling Darms Lane Linda's Hillside cabernet sauvignon at cost, \$70. It also has the Bonpasse cab for \$65.

"It's a beautiful thing that people in our hometown will be helping to make donations in Mom's memory," Bump-Davis said.

Tasting notes

Darms Lane Linda's Hillside cabernet sauvignon has a core flavor of black cherry with delicate notes of plum, vanilla, cassis and cinnamon.

"The 2007 Napas were a great vintage," said Darms Lane general manager Tricia Bump-Davis. "Linda's Vineyard is made in a classic feminine style. It's definitely a cab, but it's not a super oaky, in-your-face cab. And the tannins in '07 were really smooth."

The wine, dedicated to the late Linda Bump, was produced under the direction of Darms Lane winemaker Brian Mox, who has a chemistry degree from MIT, graduate studies in viticulture and enology at California-Davis and formerly has worked at prestigious wineries, such as Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, Etude Wines and Pine Ridge Winery.

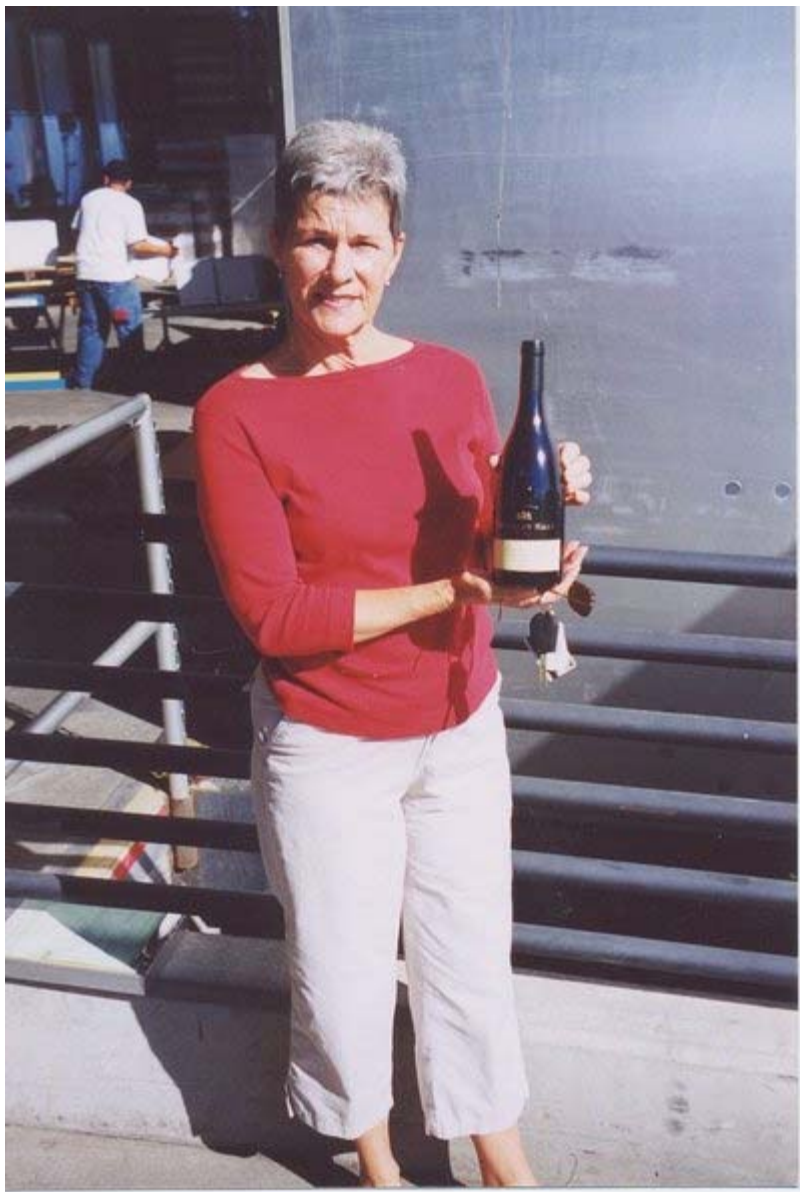
"Brian has been with us since the transition to cabernet sauvignon, and he knew Mom very well," Bump-Davis said. "It was special for him to make a wine to honor my mom."

Original Print Headline: Charity inside the bottle

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Associate Images:




After the death of Linda Bump (shown), part of the area where the grapes grow was renamed Linda's Hillside Vineyard. Courtesy



The Darms Lane cab is dedicated to Linda Bump. TOM GILBERT / Tulsa World

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