UC Davis Collection Interview: Gail Unzelman

Conducted by Jullianne Ballou

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1. JB: How old were you when you started to collect wine books? And why wine?

GU: The wine book collection began when my husband Ron and I moved to San Francisco in 1962 so he could attend U.C. San Francisco Medical School and we discovered wine. I was 22, and two years married. We were both born and raised in Orange County in southern California and had not known wine at the dinner table, or anywhere else, except the communion cup in church. Wine was a fascinating new subject, and we were ripe to learn everything we could about it. Books have always been a part of my life, and looking back, I guess collecting was too. Luckily, I say, there was no internet to search for wine information, so we obviously turned to books. The wines of California, France and Germany were our first studies. Mainly basic information on “what is,” “why,” “how to.” I remember one of the first books we got was Michael Broadbent’s 1968 *Wine Tasting. A Practical Handbook*. It was a great primer and just what we needed. In 1971 Bob Blumberg & Hannum published their *Fine Wines of California*, the first up-to-date guide book on California wineries and wines. Any weekend that we could get away, we looked forward to a drive to one of the Bay Area wine regions to explore the wineries; we were less than an hour from Sonoma, or Napa, or Livermore, or the south Bay. Remember, gas was only 25 cents a gallon. A salami chub, a hunk of cheese, and a loaf of French bread and off we went. In the city our favorite, and most important wine mentor was the venerable wine merchant firm Draper & Esquin. Fatherly Carl Petrowski took us (but Ron mainly) under his wing to learn and explore new bottles. I usually took off for their small case of selected books on wine.

2. JB: Were you collecting anything else at the time?

GU: Yes, always. I am sure I have one of those “born collector” genes — you either have it or you don’t. As a young child I remember my grandmother had this intricately woven Indian basket sitting on the fireplace mantel; it was filled with buttons, hundreds of buttons, all kinds, all colors. It was my favorite thing to play with. Over the years I collected postage stamps, seashells, butterflies, and a fishbowl full of marbles, and probably several other treasures that I have forgotten. While Ron and I were able to be in San Francisco with all of its offerings, I found John Henry Nash and fine press printing. I formed a significant collection of his printed works—both books and ephemeral pieces. Later, when I realized wine, its history and literature, was to be my life’s endeavor, I sold the Nash collection and focused only on wine material. Naturally, corkscrews, wine labels, postcards, and poster stamps all entered the picture. But we can talk more about those along the way.

3. JB: To whom did you sell the Nash collection? And how did you determine its value?

GU: The collection was sold to John Crichton, Brick Row Bookshop in San Francisco, in 1984 or ‘85. John Crichton, a gracious, old-fashioned bookseller, had (and still has, actually), a fine bookshop near Union Square. Whenever I went to the city on a book hunt, whether fine press or wine related, I usually stopped by Brick Row to say hello and see if they might have anything for me. Over the years, many lovely books were purchased there. So when I wanted to sell Nash, John was the first person I called to see if he was interested. He had sold me a goodly number of the books so he knew the quality and condition, and the rarity of many of the broadsides and ephemeral pieces. Coming up with a mutually agreed upon price was easy—we both knew the value of the books. I told John there were a few wine-related Nash books that I did not want to sell — *Vintage Festival*; *Napa Wine*; *Silverado Squatters*; *Trial of the Wine Brewers*; *In Old Vintage Days*. This was fine with him. He happily carted off all the rest.

4. JB: Can you describe the genesis of Wayward Tendrils? Twenty-five years is an incredible run for an independent newsletter. How were you able to keep it in operation for so long?

GU: The *Wayward Tendrils* turned out to be a major chapter in my life, with several resulting side chapters. Let me set the picture: The date was 1990, I was 50 years old and had retired a couple of years before from what I called my competitive tennis career; our two sons were grown and out of the house, Ron was happily busy with his OB-GYN practice, and I had only recently published my first wine book (*Wine & Gastronomy*). The Wayward Tendrils Wine Book Collectors Club was the idea of Bob Foster, a wine writer for *California Grapevine* and an expert wine judge around the country. He was also a wine book collector, and his *Grapevine* column reviewed books on wine. It was also Bob who suggested the club name, taken from Ian Campbell’s vintage wine book *Wayward Tendrils of the Vine* written in 1947. Bob took his idea to Bo Simons, librarian of the Sonoma County Wine Library in Healdsburg, whom I knew well. Bo told Bob he should “get in touch with Gail.” I am not sure Bob knew much about me; Bo probably told him I was an avid longtime wine book collector, and would probably know other collectors or wine book dealers or wine historians, and like-mannered souls who would be interested. I had dreamed of such an organization for many years and was very excited to help get the club started. We asked Jim Gabler if he would join us as one of the “founders” and sign the announcement letter we intended to send out. (Five years earlier, in 1985, Jim had published *Wine Into Words. A History & Bibliography of Wine Books in the English Language*, the first such bibliography—it was so sorely needed and eagerly welcomed by the wine book world.) Of course I agreed to get the letter out to whatever mailing list we could conjure up. Remember, 1990 was really pre-computer age, before easy, instant communication existed. The main reason for founding our club, we announced, was to “provide a network and develop a sense of community among wine book collectors.” The *Wayward Tendrils* newsletter would be our main avenue of communication. Naturally, since Bob was the writer, I assumed he would handle the newsletter; I was happy to handle membership, rosters, dues, etc., to organize and keep the WT going. Annual dues were set at $10, and the newsletter would be issued four times a year; our encouraging initial membership response was fifty members, from the U.S., Great Britain, and Canada.

When we scheduled our first issue of the newsletter for March 1991, Bob cheerfully told me ... Bob always did everything cheerfully ... that he hadn’t planned to add the newsletter to his already busy schedule, and “Gail, I thought you would do it.” I am still at a loss for words when I think of this thought. I was not a writer, nor an editor. As I mentioned, only earlier that year had I published my first book, a bibliographic reference on the works of Andre Simon. I had no idea how to put together a wine-book newsletter.

I knew I had substantial background knowledge of the subject. I had been a serious student of wine literature since the ‘60s, was familiar with, and owned, most bibliographic references on the subject, had dealt with most of the specialist booksellers from America, Europe, and Australia, and had formed a worthy library of a couple of thousand wine books. Also, I would love to share this passion and knowledge of wine books. So I said I would be the editor/publisher. For the next 25 years.

From the very beginning, the members were reminded that this newsletter was not going to work without their participation—whether it be their want list or list of duplicates or a book review—new or antiquarian or a question on book care or any newsy wine book bit—just send it in. Ours was the only group and publication in existence dedicated to the literature of wine (and it still was when we retired in 2015).

With Volume 11 in January 2001, our WT newsletter became the *WT Quarterly*. Over our beginning 10-year span, each issue easily grew from its ten pages or so into a substantial 20- to 40-page journal of top-quality articles from the members on all aspects of collecting wine books. Our journal merited a more “prestigious” title. Here, I would like to mention those members, almost forty in number, who helped sustain WT’s production and kept Madam Editor very pleased for those twenty-five years. Listed alphabetically, these notable and loyal WT contributors were R. Hume (Bob) Andrews, Jeffrey Benson, Mannie Berk, Roy Brady, Will Brown, Eberhard Buehler, Kathleen Burk, George Caloyannidis, Marvin Collins, John Danza, Hugo Dunn-Meynell, Christopher Fielden, Bob Foster, Jim Gabler, Valmai Hankel, Robert Hutton, Bruce Johnson, Hugh Johnson, Warren Johnson, Gordon Jones, Callie Konno, Joe Lynch, Fred McMillin, John Maher, Barbara Marinacci, Isaac Oelgart, Tom Pinney, Brian Rea, Allan Shields, Bo Simons, Erik Skovenborg, Linda Stevens, Angela Stewart, Charles Sullivan, Hennie Taljaard, Ruth Walker, Dean Walters, Nina Wemyss. I’ll admit that I became extremely efficient at twisting arms to get material from hesitant members, but once they had survived one article, they realized they could relish others. I actually learned this lesson myself during my WT tenure, and never ran out of interesting subjects—just pull a favorite wine book from the shelf, I liked to say. May I elaborate a bit on these contributors and their articles?

5. JB: Yes, please do, and can you include answers to the following? 1) Who comprised the core group of writers who wrote for the newsletter, at least in the early years? 2) Did you pay writers for their contributions, or was most of the effort voluntary?

GU: Wonderful. I will enjoy remembering these very special people. As would be expected, and this editor prayed for, the generous WT souls listed above were a varied group in terms of professions, collecting interests, writing skills. They did have one thing in common: they did not expect, nor receive, any monetary payment for their efforts!

(Throughout the WT’s lifetime, I compiled a yearly index of each issue and gathered them into 5-year cumulative indexes—contributors, subjects, books reviewed. I couldn’t have accomplished this review without these invaluable memory keys by my side. Thankfully, they are available at the WT website.)

I’ll begin this survey with one of our “charter” members, Fred McMillin of San Francisco, a wine educator famous for his entertaining classes about wines, wine history & wine tasting. Fred, who never missed an issue, was really our only true “regular columnist.” I named his column “Books & Bottles” and created a special “vignette” for it. Probably most Tendrils never realized this, but Fred’s articles were the only ones published that included notes on wines themselves. Co-founder Bob Foster also had a permanent “vignette” for his “In the Wine Library” book review column. His reviews were originally published in the *California Grapevine*, but the *Grapevine* and Bob graciously gave WT permission to reprint them. Hugo Dunn-Meynell, Director of the I.W.&F.S. in London and a successor to André Simon, was an immediate supporter and frequent early contributor of news on recent UK wine books. Hugo, gracious as they come, was an encouraging ally during my visits to London in the early years of researching my bibliographic tribute to André Simon, *Printer’s Ink*, published in 2011. Hugo’s WT pieces arrived via fax or mail, always in his storied flowing penmanship, often written with a fountain pen on light blue stationery. He also spread the word of the forming of the WT to the Circle of Wine Writers, which was very kind. Roy Brady (Los Angeles), a magnanimous collector, was one of the first WT members and he presented his brilliantly written offerings for years to come. Roy was the ultimate student of wine and collector of its presence, including the wines of the world and their labels (his collection of 50,000 labels went to UCD on his death in 1998); two signature wine book collections (his first went to UC Fresno, his second time around the books accompanied the labels to UCD); and a large batch of vintage wine menus. He took great joy in the WT. I took even greater joy in his friendship and guidance and support. Which reminds me of the little gift he sent my way, with the note: “Gail, a small piece of editorial furniture I found most useful. Since your need is now greater than mine, I pass it on. — Roy.” Enclosed was his ink stamp “BULLSHIT” from his publishing days. The stamp and his note still decorate the wall next to my desk to always bring a smile. (Somewhere along the way in this interview, we will talk about *The Brady Book*.) A dynamic duo of early Tendril membership were wine historians Charles Sullivan and Tom Pinney, Charles located in northern California and Tom in southern California. Ron and I had known Charles from our early days of wine tasting in the Bay Area, and I was quite familiar with his writings on wine and California wine history. For the new journal, he excitedly submitted articles on numerous topics, with titles like “Hidden Treasures in Government Publications?” “In Old Vintage Days”; and “The Etymology of ‘Winery’.” He also wrote our first exploration into the world of Frona Wait. It was a momentous day in 1999 when Charles proposed that the WT serialize his unpublished, ground-breaking history of Zinfandel. I asked why he had chosen our small journal for such an honor: “The WT membership contains a large percentage of the world audience that really cares much about the question, at least from a scholarly point of view. So, where better?” When UC Press published it as a book in 2003, it was truly moving to see that Charles had dedicated the book to me. In 2006, on the 100th anniversary of the great San Francisco earthquake and fire, Charles wrote “The Great Wine Quake,” told from the perspective of the State’s wine industry. This story, like his story on Zinfandel, had never before been researched and told. Another multi-installment superb study by Charles was “U.C. Grapes & Wine: A Discourse...with Reflections...and Notes.” In 2010, when he presented his manuscript for “Wine in California. The Early Years: Mission Wines 1698–1822,” I immediately saw its dual value. We would print the “Mission Wines” segment into a separate booklet and send a copy to each of the California missions, who were dramatically lacking most vineyard and wine information from their mission history. This pleased me enormously. Tom Pinney, a professor of English and a world-renowned scholar of Kipling, was also a dedicated student of wine and its literature. I never knew what Tom might put into the mail to me “to use if you wish,” adding apologetically, “I just had to write it.” From “A History & Checklist of Winery & Merchant Newsletters” to “The Wine Book List of Alfred A. Knopf” to writings on George Saintsbury and Philip Wagner to “Maynard Amerine & Frona Eunice Wait” to *The Grapes of New York* to “The Most Important Book Ever Written about California Wine” to the genesis of *The Story of Wine in California* by M.F.K. Fisher & Max Yavno (for which Pinney diligently researched and identified most of the non-captioned photographs). I immediately printed out that list and inserted into my copy of the book. Over the years, Tom came to value and make use of my collection of historical wine material for illustrating his wine histories. It was always a pleasure to spend time with him searching through my holdings. During one of these sessions, Tom noticed the very sizeable research file on my favorite pioneer winegrower/wine author, George Husmann. Unbeknownst to me, Husmann was one of the thirteen individuals that Tom had chosen for his *Makers of American Wine: A Record of Two Hundred Years*. I was thrilled that Tom could make full use of the Husmann material. This is why I collect wine history, I mused. (Sorry, I got sidetracked. Back to the WT contributors.) Bo Simons, wine librarian at the Sonoma Co. Wine Library and one of the instigators in the formation of the WT*,* has always been an enthusiastic contributor, whether sending enlightened book reviews or bibliographic lists or well-researched essays on wine writers and book collectors. In our first five volumes, Bo’s submissions numbered almost two dozen, and he only slowed down when his work duties were overwhelming. He will agree that his stand-out piece of detective work and reporting was “The Quest for Crahan,” Crahan being Marcus Crahan (1901–1978), “one of the most famous, yet mainly unknown, collectors of wine and gastronomy books.” Crahan had been a mystery man for many years, and Simons’ was a triumphant article that we both rejoiced in more than anyone would know. James Gabler, occupied as he was with compiling his 2004 second edition of *Wine Into Words*, wrote an invaluable premier study of the prized series of Nicolas Catalogs, “Wine, Art, and Nicolas,” for our January 2001 issue—the first to carry our new *Wayward Tendrils Quarterly* masthead. Linda Stevens, a wine historian and a fellow admirer of George Husmann, lived in Hermann, MO, where Husmann had begun his wine career. A WT contributor from the beginning, she wrote a number of important articles on the early mid-American wine scene and its literature, including “Nicholas Longworth: Read Between the Lines.” Jeffrey Benson, British wine author, was a supporting WT participant from the get-go and offered a fine assortment of topics. One particularly appreciated contribution was “A Selection of Vintage Wine Books Recommended for Our Pleasure.” *Robert Hutton,* a retired cataloger, including of wine books at the Library of Congress, wrote his first article for the WT in 1996 on “Wine at the Library of Congress,” and later followed it up with the intriguing “The Delta Collection,” a mysterious classification of little triangles used at the LC. Bob also shared his knowledge on “The Wine Books in Jefferson’s Library” and “The Foaming Packet: Pushkin on Wine.”

One of my favorite subjects in collecting printed wine material is bibliography. I *love* checklists, even select lists. Lists in general are exciting. During its lifetime the WT published a valuable selection in this field. Fittingly, our first supplement issue, in 2003, was a 20-page study of Canadian wine literature by Eberhard Buehler. Eberhard was an amazing bibliophile, with a houseful of superior books in several interests. Wine was a major one, and he had amassed a stellar library, carefully catalogued and annotated long before WT was founded. When he retired to Toronto, he of course gained an immediate interest in the wines of Canada, their history and literature. So my simple request to Eberhard for a “piece on Canadian wine books” naturally returned an expertly researched and written bibliographic history of their wine industry. Eberhard also wrote a wonderful tribute to a favorite author, “H. Warner Allen (1881–1968): A Biography and Bibliography.” Veteran WT member, Valmai Hankel, rare books & special collections librarian at the State Library of So. Australia, joyfully, and expertly represented the wine literature of Australia. Her article “Oenotypophily: Wine and Print in the State Library” presented “a grand bibliographic tour of the largest collection of wine books in Australia’s biggest wine-producing state.” I also welcomed her article “The Eager Oenographer: With a Select List of Books on Grape Growing & Winemaking Important in 19th Century Australia,” which she followed with “Australian Books of the 20th Century: A Personal Selection.” In a later article she told us about Australian author “Oscar A. Mendelsohn: Wine & Food Writer and Polymath,” which she described as “a glance at the life and achievements of a scholarly, urbane and witty writer on food & wine who is scarcely known today.” When the WT retired in 2015, Valmai was writing a history of André Simon’s visit to Australia in 1963–64. It would have been lovely to print that. Another early member and contributor, Erik Skovenborg, was a passionate and quite knowledgeable collector of books on wine and health. Almost equally enthusiastic was his love for wine-themed bookplates, which he shared in “Bookplates with Wine Motifs. How to Commission ... Use ... Collect ... Love Them.” Magnificently illustrated with samples from his personal collection, new aficionados were surely born with this article. He certainly also got me interested in the entertaining woodcuts of “Richard Rother: A Life with Wine & Art,” and all of the books illustrated by him. The WT Index will reveal that Will Brown was a regular contributor from the day he joined in 1999. A retired physician living in southern Oregon who had recently received his winemaker’s credential from the University of California Davis, Will’s special interest was the wines of the Pacific Northwest. He enjoyed writing book reviews, and I could always count on him to send in several reviews, whether of recent releases or old favorites he had been re-reading. He also compiled an outstanding “Select, Annotated Bibliography of Northwest Wine Books” that delved into almost every book written on the subject. Allan Shields, retired California State University professor of philosophy, became a much appreciated asset to our journal when he joined in 2000. One of his first contributions was a thoughtful examination of the “Bancroft’s Oral Histories of California Winemen” series, in which he listed the sixty-six so-far published oral history interviews. A concluding note stated seven more would be available by the end of 2000. Allan gave WT readers numerous book reviews and studious essays with titles like “Wine Esthetics: The Guzzler, Bibber, Taster,” “From Wine Press to Printing Press,” and “A Lust for the Lady de Coverly” (who would guess this is about “untangling the roots” and dispelling the “myth of the origin of the Thompson Seedless Grape in California”?). Brilliant. In our January 2010 issue, it was a special pleasure to print a 16-page excerpt from Allan’s massive study “Gustav Eisen: A Man of Many Achievements (1847–1940),” a valuable contribution to the literature of wine. Mannie Berk, a learned wine book collector and gentlemanly proprietor of the Rare Wine Co. headquartered in Connecticut, was an early advocate of the Tendrils. Mannie’s library focused on early 18th & 19th century books, with a special interest in Bordeaux, Burgundy, and Madeira. He knew the wines well, and he knew the literature. Though he only contributed one article, his brilliantly written and illustrated “Wine Literature Reviewed: Old and Rare Wine Books” was enough. I have never seen a better one written. It is invaluable, even today. Christopher Fielden, a WT member beginning in 1990, was a British wine author and long-time member of the British wine trade. He also avidly collected early books on Burgundy. In addition to his enlightening articles on the early sources about Burgundy, Christopher faithfully sent first-class book reviews on many different wine topics. Brian Rea, a retired bartender story-teller extraordinaire and consultant to the Adult Beverage Service Industry, formed one of the finest “booze book” libraries in the country. An early and enthusiastic Tendril, he contributed numerous pieces from his “Barchives” for our education and entertainment. He had some very rare books, and lots of rare stories. Isaac Oelgart described himself as “a born bibliophile.” One of his first contributions to the WT was “Thoughts and Observations on the Nature of Bibliography Relative to Collectors of Wine Books. Together with Brief Comments on the Types of Bibliography, Their Use, and the Role of Bibliography.” Warren Johnson, proprietor of Second Harvest Books, found special pleasure in wine fiction. We began his “Wine Tales” column in 1996, and never again was a Tendril lacking a mysteriously good wine book to read. I especially appreciated his excellent sleuthing in finding new titles for my wine fiction collection, almost 600 now. R. Hume Andrews (Bob), a long-time wine friend who shared a passion for vintage Port and books on wine, enjoyed a love affair with words—a perfect candidate to recruit for WT duty. He called his clever contributions “Notes from the ‘Open Trench’.” We never knew what he would reveal in his next article: notes about a neophyte collector, Maurice Healy, writing about eiswein, wine newsletters. Wonderful stuff. When John Danza sent in his application for membership in 2004 and noted his collecting interest was “André Simon,” I couldn’t have been more pleased. Here was a collector who shared my passion for Simon. His first article, “Inscribed André Simon Books,” lives as one of my vintage favorites. In time for the upcoming issue, he suggested we invite several Tendrils to send in their special Simon inscriptions to join his examples. It made such a fun article. John continued to revel me with brilliant periodic Simoniana for the lifetime of the WT*,* including the story of “Constable’s Wine Library, Edited by André Simon.” He also threw in such gems as “The 1870 Cellar of Charles Dickens.” Gordon Jones of Napa, and his equally capable wife, Dorothy, were wine enthusiasts and talented book collectors of the old school. They had a marvelous wine library kept company by a serious collection of Californiana. Gordon was a talented writer and enjoyed sharing diverse and entertaining stories about their collection. I always looked forward to his articles. Marvin Collins was not a wine book collector, but as a seriously astute collector of wine history, mainly that of California, he had an expansive knowledge of the literature. And he loved to research and write. He wrote brilliantly in “Edward Bosqui’s *Grapes & Grape Vines of California*. California’s First Great Wine Book”; in “Maj. Ben Truman: The Man Who Ate and Drank California”; in the *Pacific Wine & Spirit Review*; in “The Young Bulldog...Charles Wetmore”; and in an in-depth review, “*Ferdinand Haber: An Illustrated Biography*.” All the while he was working on a biography of a major California wine pioneer. I hope he can finish it. Barbara Marinacci gets the award for the longest running WT contribution, her installments of “Vinaceous Correspondents: Martin Ray’s Friendships with Eminent Oenophiles.” Her biographical masterpiece on California vintner Martin Ray, her stepfather, ran from v.13 (2013) through v.18 (2018)—five years. It created such interest that we uploaded the completed work to our WT website. Barbara also dug through her files and wrote a brilliant piece on the friendship of John Steinbeck and Martin Ray, “*The Grapes of Wrath* and the Wrath of Grapes.” George Caloyannidis, a retired Napa Valley architect, was a long-time collector and student of “the art of good living” before he learned of the Tendrils in 2000. His contributions, such as “Books for True Wine and Food Lovers,” and reviews on *How to Love Wine* and *Why You Like the Wines You Like* were always insightful delights. Kathy Burk, Professor of Modern & Contemporary History at University College, London, first regaled our journal in 2011 with “Edward Ward 1667–1731: The Grub Street Life and Wine.” I enjoyed her writing. (Her introductory first line: “Ned Ward was a hard-drinking, womanising, lewd, vulgar writer ...” Somehow, Kathy then found the time to research and write “The History and Culture of Wine.” Such a pleasure. Hugh Johnson, a gracious and generous mid-term Tendril, wrote his first article, “A Remembrance of Harry Waugh,” following Waugh’s death in late 2001. Our Tendril fellowship also enjoyed, and appreciated, Hugh’s personal memoir “Working with André: My Apprenticeship with the Founder of the Wine & Food Society” in the October 2003 issue. In 2005 Hugh had kindly given me a copy of a scarce, finely printed little booklet with permission to reprint it in the WT if I wished. It was his “Wine as A Communicator: An Address to the Wynkyn de Worde Society, 18th May 1972, at Stationers Hall, London.” Of course I was thrilled, and so were all *Wayward Tendrils* readers. Ruth Walker, an esteemed ABAA bookseller friend from my early collecting days, is also a respected book restoration craftsman. She happily responded to my request for articles on book care, or repairs that a collector could do, and other valuable tips on being a good caretaker of one’s collection. We sincerely cherished the name we gave her column:“Corners Bumped & Worn.” I met Dean Walters several years before the age of the WT, when he was a top-notch purveyor of wine antiques and I was a novice collector of corkscrews. He usually also had a few antiquarian wine books for sale. When his interest in early California wine advertising grew to a passion, I think this is when he became a Tendril, and wrote some outstanding articles on the Pre-Prohibition California wine scene and its remarkable printed history. Dean has now established an Early California Wine Trade Museum with his extensive collection—which now includes some of those rare book titles he used to sell to me. Nina Wemyss, a Napa Valley-based wine historian and raconteur, loved to give learned, entertaining presentations on “Wine & Civilization: Wine’s Rich Relationship with the Arts.” She did not enjoy writing. But she was a close friend, and a good supporter of the Tendrils from its founding, so I won. Her magnificent lecture, brilliantly illustrated, appeared in 2004. And, as noted earlier, if you can come to do one article, more can surely follow. A major contribution to the literature of wine followed: “*Atlas de la France Vinicole. L. Larmat:* A Cartographic Poem,” written by Nina (and co-author GU) in 2011. With the beloved Larmat map books in hand, a comprehensive, illustrated survey of these guides to the wine regions of France was compiled. And then, for fun, Nina wrote “Sir Winston, Bubbles and Books,” giving us this quote: “If you cannot read all of your books, at any rate handle, or as it were, fondle them—peer into them.” John Maher, a new Tendril from Spain, might be our most surprising contributor. In 2012, rather out of the blue, he sent a major article, “Frona Eunice Wait: Herculean Deeds of Worthwhile Achievement,” the first in-depth study of Frona Wait, author of one of the 19th C cornerstones of California wine literature. John, we learned, was born in Argentina, grew up in Peru, educated in England, lectured at the University of London, and now had wine and book interests in Valencia. Two lively book reviews later, his next scholarly inspiration appeared, “Red as Alicante Wine: The Wines of Alicante in English Life and Letters, 1500–2007.” And then, no more. A magnificent fortune. Joseph (Joe) Lynch joined the WT on its fifth birthday and was an enthusiastic and ready correspondent from then on. Joe didn’t compose an article until our 13th year—an impressive listing of all the books he could locate that had the word “uncorked” in the title—but my regular “News & Notes” column was eternally grateful to Joe Lynch for the bits & pieces he loved to send me. Bruce Johnson, retired Library Director of the California Historical Society collections, and I shared two passions: printing and wine. He enjoyed a great knowledge of early San Francisco printers, wrote a book on one of them, and contributed a superb WT essay, “Printing California’s Wine Labels,” with looks at the most prestigious firms and illustrated samples of their wine labels. Angela Stewart, a neighbor of Roy Brady in the Los Angeles area, was a fellow wine label collector and publisher of the *Wine Label News*. She joined the WT at the outset and wrote our first article on the subject of wine labels, “Collecting Wine Labels: A Wealth of Information.” She then delighted us with “Oh Those Beautiful and Interesting Wine Labels!” Callie Konno was not a collector, but having a long career in the wine trade in California and a Master’s Degree in librarianship, she had a keen interest in books, wine, and wine history. We met at the Sonoma County Wine Library, and she became a Tendril soon after. After a wee bit of arm twisting, two valuable articles were written for WT*,* both from her personal experiences. The first, “Story of the Vintners Club Big Book,” recalled the publishing of *The Vintners Club: Fourteen Years of Wine Tastings 1973-1987* (1988). It was a giant book of 1150 pages and 6.5 pounds that is a “data-rich reflection of the wine industry in California at a seminal moment in the industry’s history...” In 2015 Callie finished her monumental survey and historical interpretation of the Draper & Esquin Catalogs in time for publication in our next to last issue. Well done. Hennie Taljaard, a South African wine book collector and new member in 2014, received the front-page position of the last WT issue (2015) for his essay “South African Wine Publications Pre-1994: A Collector’s Overview.” Hennie’s work is an invaluable bibliographic reference for all wine book collectors.

An impressive writing staff, I would say. There were other members, of course, who wrote a welcomed piece here and there. And veteran Tendrils who never wrote an article for our journal, yet were enthusiastic and supported the Society with their membership. Several immediately come to mind: Mike McKirdy, Warren Winiarski, Nick Hodgson, Paul Cerza ... I should not attempt this list. All knew the duty for regular and major contributions fell to those dear hearts noted, and to whom the WT members, our journal, and its editor, are forever grateful.

6. JB: Please say more about your contributions to Wayward Tendrils, as both a writer and an editor. What was your process of working with writers? How often were pieces assigned by you versus pitched by the writers?

GU: I think I may have answered parts of this query in my remarks on the contributors. I would add that the publishing atmosphere of the *WT Quarterly* could be defined as “casual” rather than “strict.” From our founding, we as a society of wine book collectors, in its broadest sense, felt a close fellowship, and this never changed. The Tendril membership application form asked questions such as 1) how long have you collected? 2) do you have a special interest? 3) what languages do you collect? 4) how many books in your collection? The first three questions were used for our annual Membership Roster, with name, address and contact numbers. Collectors with like interests could easily contact one another, and at the same time, this information opened a friendly door between a new member and the group—and Madam Editor. I sent a “welcome!” letter to all new members, along with the *WTQ* issues for the year and a Membership Roster. I would add a short personal note, most often referring to their special collecting interest, and encouraged every new member to tell us about his/her collection, or a favorite book, or a scarce book eagerly sought. It must have been understood by all that as a small membership society, submissions to our journal would not be compensated. At least I do not remember anyone ever asking how much we paid our contributors. Except for a few old-timers, everyone was encouraged to correspond and submit their pieces via email. (Annual dues were handled by check through the mails.)

Our *Quarterly* was formatted and printed in two-column pages, with full justification (my choice). As editor, when I received a manuscript, my first task was to what I lovingly called “Tendrilize” it and get it into the WT format and font. In respect for the writer’s effort, I purposefully tried not to make unnecessary editorial changes, only when grammar or muddled sentence structure got in the way. While massaging the text successfully onto the page, I would add initial letters, or illustrations. After a review by the writer, it was ready to await assimilation into the next issue. I thoroughly enjoyed this whole process, and overall was quite pleased with the result. If I had had any formal training in graphic design or typesetting or editing, it would not have been as much fun, would it? I would have been smart enough to be worried.

Gail Unzelman was proudly in the category of prolific WTcontributors. “News & Notes,” the editor’s column, didn’t miss an issue, and depending on what was going on in the world of wine books, it regularly filled one or two pages. I also used this space to introduce new members.

I honestly do not remember writing for publication before the WT*.* (The Introduction to *Wine & Gastronomy* in 1990 did not count.) But I was bulging with historical wine information, of the printed variety, and excited to share. I feel the WT was a miracle of sorts. It certainly was my lead to a new life-path of writing on, authoring, and publishing books about wine.

Making use once again of the indexes of the *WTQ*, I have reviewed my 25 years of WT writings. There are almost 90 entries listed, so I will summarize and make select choices to record here. I found it interesting to see that in the first ten years, I wrote only 20 articles; in the third 5-year period, 14; in the final 10 years, fifty-two. Let’s take it five years at a time. A couple of the earliest articles were based directly on my research findings in Missouri wine country, especially uncovering the “why” of Henry Shaw’s notoriously rare 1884 book, *Wine & Civilisation* [sic], and getting the necessary data to compose a pioneering Descriptive Essay and Checklist of the historic and important “Bushberg Catalogues” published between 1869 and 1895. In “From Card Catalogue to Computer: Organizing Our Collections,” written in 1997, I must have enjoyed relating my computer frustrations, as my last sentence lamented, “...I would love to know if there is a simpler way to do this.” Right. Between 2001 and 2005, there were several bibliographic contributions of note, “Wine Books from the Peter Pauper Press,” a survey and checklist of Cocks & Feret *Bordeaux et ses Vins*, and bibliographic reference sources for the collector of wine books in all languages. I had great fun compiling “Superfluous Novel Facts” after tidying-up the wine fiction shelves one day: how many collectors realize how often “vineyards” “vintage” “harvest” “vine(s)” “wine” “grapes” have been used in book titles? The vintage during the next five years was quite pleasing and noteworthy—some perhaps a little esoteric, but I think still important and interesting and not-known, like “The Mystery of Bumstead’s Bibliography” or “F.W.C. The First Wine Book Collector?” or “The Celebrated Dirty Dick of Ye Olde Port Wine House & His Curious Pamphlets” or “Amidst the Confusion of André Simon’s *Wines of the World Pocket Library* Series” or “*In the Vine Country*, 1893. A Visit with Somerville & Ross.” Vol.20 #1 featured “Wayward Tendrils Wine Literature. A *Premier Cru* Harvest,” a survey of the WTessays “your Editor considers to be most memorable, exciting, entertaining, and valuable additions to the study of wine through its literature.” That was a pleasure to do, and I raised a toast to all Tendrils. We did not lessen our efforts between 2011 and 2015 and continued to publish amazing wine literature. One of my contributions was also one of my favorites. I had finally managed to “unearth and bring to life” Thomas Hart Hyatt, the author of the first wine book printed in California. He called his treatise, *Hyatt’s Hand-Book of Grape Culture* and published it in San Francisco in 1867. I published his life story as an illustrated 20-page Supplement to Vol.23#3—“Thomas Hart Hyatt: The Man and His Book.” The Tendrils had published a number of Supplements over the years, but this was my first. I couldn’t have been more pleased. Hyatt’s milestone book was well-known to the esteemed historians of California wine, but no one had ever known or written anything about Hyatt, the man. But now we knew. I rounded out the other issues with vintage memorable non-technical wine books of beauty, and discovered the story of “D’Ambrosio and Brady: *Old Wine, Fine Wine?*” and savored “A Feast for the Eyes: George H. Ellwanger,” and “Charles Mozley Delights the Eye & the Soul” and “A Most Handsome Book: F. Gray Griswold.” Salubriously, I slid into 2015 with “A Confession: Collecting Book Covers. Or, as Charles Dickens once said, “There are books of which the back and covers are by far the best part.” And they had nothing whatsoever at all to do with wine.

At the end of 2015, our 25th anniversary and my 75th birthday, I retired—and the Wayward Tendrils retired with me. I think our accomplishment in the realm of wine-book literature was invaluable. Our membership averaged about 150-160 wine book enthusiasts (including wine libraries, wine booksellers, and collectors). Our WT website went up in 2011. We mailed four WT issues a year, sometimes with a “Supplement” when an in-depth article was lengthy and deemed worthy of a separate cover. We had written about the wine literature of almost every winegrowing region in the world, most of the wine libraries, thousands of wine books from fiction to rare antiquarian, and numerous biographical essays on the authors who wrote the books. Significantly, many of these essays, or their subject, are to be found only in the annals of the WT. (To my amazement, when I counted the wine books that we had either reviewed, written a full-length essay on, or mentioned as a historical reference, they numbered in the hundreds every year. It was inspiring.) Over the years, as postal rates & printing costs increased, dues went to $25 a year, but never exceeded that. Our contributors did not expect payment, and no advertising was ever accepted; every page of every issue was filled with text and illustrations (the illustrations most often from the writer’s or my collection). This scheme worked financially because I considered the WT my labor of love, and I was honored to do it. Besides, it was exciting to explore along the way those “side-chapters” that were introduced into my wine-book life through the Wayward Tendrils.

I am most thankful that all of the WT issues are now online at the WT website. It is such a valuable resource. These WT wine writings, not on wine, but on wine books, will be available to entertain and educate for many, many vintages to come.

The Mission of our Wine Book Collector’s Society and its Quarterly has been to communicate the literature of wine and its lore to fellow collectors and students of printed wine material. In twenty- five years of publication our contributors have provided an abundant wealth of literature, on all aspects of the printed word, for all to savor.

7. JB: When did you write and publish your first California wine history book? How did this come about?

GU: This is one of those serendipitous WT side chapters that I referred to. In 1990, the year we began the WT society, noted California wine historian Ernest Peninou also published a new wine book, *Leland Stanford’s Great Vina Ranch 1881–1919*. With Bo Simons, librarian of the Sonoma County Wine Library and Assistant Editor of *Wayward Tendrils Newsletter*, I went to Mr Peninou’s San Francisco home to interview him about his latest book on California’s wine past. We also hoped to learn something about this (elusive, shy?) author of several important California wine history titles dating back to the 1950s. He provided a “traditional” SF rooftop lunch of salami, olives, a baguette and a bottle of his own red wine. A good talker, he regaled us with wonderful anecdotes of California wine lore; but he waved away any personal questions. Somehow through all of this, Mr Peninou and I seemed to hit it off. (He later confided, “I don’t trust or much like lawyers; women either.”) He informed Bo and me that he was working on a wine history of the State of California based on the seven Viticultural Districts designated by the Board of California Viticultural Commissioners in 1881. But, he moaned, he had lost his typist, and did not know another. I cheerfully, and obviously interested, said, “I would be happy to help you.” And that was the beginning of an almost ten-year partnership. He showed me the two rooms where he kept his working files, or manuscripts: lining the rooms, on the hardwood floor, were at least two sturdy plastic milk crates for each Viticultural District. Mind boggling. For nearly fifty years he had been diligently compiling information on the wine districts—wine makers, grape growers, grape acreage and winemaking statistics—going back to the earliest days of the State. He had written numerous drafts for each district history: some pages in his penmanship, which I learned to read, some pages typed, some “copied & pasted” from whatever the source (but hardly ever cited). All sorted into the milk crates. And he never discarded a rewritten or updated draft. He said we would work on the manuscripts one district at a time. I suggested beginning with the Sonoma Viticultural District as I was most familiar with its history and had the most at-hand illustrative material. I told him that I had been passionately collecting California wine history materials for over 25 years — books, postcards, pamphlets, wine labels, billheads, letterheads — and had specialized in Sonoma and Napa, my favorite historical areas. He clearly recognized my interest and as often as we could, he delighted in taking me on day trips to visit historical wine sites around our wine country, including Sonoma and Napa counties. We explored Livermore Valley during one trip, and spent a day at Winehaven. I was completely fascinated to see old winery ruins and places where vines once thrived. I learned where the long-missing wineries of George Husmann were located and almost religiously beheld the ruins of Talcoa Winery in the Carneros and his Chiles Valley winery site now covered with an irrigation pond. He knew where all of these old unrecorded relics were located. When the book was published in 1998, its title page relayed the story: *History of the Viticultural Districts of California. Volume One. History of the Sonoma Viticultural District. The Grape Growers, the Wine Makers and the Vineyards*, Compiled by Ernest P. Peninou. Assisted by Gail G. Unzelman and Michael M. Anderson (Peninou’s grand nephew, with a UCD degree and a staff position, had inherited an interest in wine, its history, and its making). The imprint was my Nomis Press, Santa Rosa, with Design & Production by [Ed] Farris Graphics, Covelo; Mr Peninou paid the bills. He had always self-published his previous books; he would not even consider a commercial publisher. He demanded complete control, and I heartily agreed with him. We would have all say on design, binding, dust jacket, illustrations (most important, because both of us favored lots, and publishers often did not). I would be in charge of these aspects of the book. Ed Farris was a protégé of renowned fine press craftsman Jim Robertson of Yolla Bolly Press in Covelo. Ed and I worked well together and always looked forward to the next book project. He became a cherished friend and masterfully produced almost every book that I made.

Our next book came at a much faster pace. Two years later, in 2000, Peninou & Unzelman wrote and published *The California Wine Association and Its Member Wineries*. I forget why we deviated from the original plan to tackle the seven viticultural districts first, but Mr. Peninou thought the story of “the mighty C.W.A., who from its founding until Prohibition, dominated the California wine industry” should be next. In 1954 Peninou and co-author Sidney Greenleaf published a brief, thirty-six page book on the C.W.A. It was the only historical monograph on this San Francisco-based giant enterprise at the time and remained so until our greatly expanded, 400-page history was printed. I was pleased that I had added much new information to Peninou’s original publication. I had scoured through the volumes of the C.W.A. directors’ minutes archived at the California Historical Society and written much new in-depth information about their winery holdings, with important dates. I learned unknown details about the destruction of their San Francisco wine depots and the millions of gallons of wine lost in the 1906 earthquake and fire, and the C.W.A.’s subsequent construction of their mammoth wine production and storage facility, Winehaven, across the bay. Mainly, though, I uncovered the life of Percy Morgan, the man behind the C.W.A. Here I relied on two magnificent resources. The first was the Pre-Prohibition *Pacific Wine & Spirit Review*, the “voice” of California’s early wine industry. When I was researching the C.W.A., there were no indexes to the issues, nor online access. I happily journeyed to the SF Public Library several days a week and carefully turned every page of every issue, and recorded many new bits of information. My other resource tool was an antique, leather-bound, bulging scrapbook found by chance several years before at a small Berkeley Antique & Paper Fair. No one at the time, including myself, knew that it had actually belonged to Percy Morgan. Peninou and I devoured every page. I still relish the research, digging pieces at a time, and then seeing everything come together. The C.W.A. history has proven to be an invaluable resource, and Mr. Peninou gave me co-authorship on the title page. And then, without a warning, he passed away late in 2002. He was 86; but I was not ready for him to “check-out,” as he liked to say.

In 2004 I took it upon myself to finish the Viticultural District histories as a tribute to Mr. Peninou. I brought those milk crates home to my office, and started in. After deciding which was the latest rewrite for each district (for goodness sake!) I amended the typed pages, some with his handwritten notes, and made a few necessary changes. The title page states “Augmented by Gail Unzelman with Winegrower Directories, Illustrations, and Index.” The six district volumes and their companion volume, “A Statistical History of the Wine Grape Acreage in California 1856–1992,” were “Xerographically produced & presented by Nomis Press for the Wine Librarians Assn, 2004.” Ed Farris professionally xeroxed them. The immensely important Viticultural District histories, almost 1500 total pages, were published. Peninou would be pleased. (They are now also online.)

8. JB: Earlier, during your survey of the *WTQ* member contributors, you mentioned *The Brady Book* and said you would talk about it later. Could you tell me more about it now.

GU: Perfect. Because this book was being brought into my life just when Mr. Peninou was leaving it. The story of *The Brady Book* is a story of two favorite wine writing people, Thomas Pinney and Roy Brady. As I mentioned earlier, both were book lovers and custodians of substantial wine libraries. Brady also had a wine cellar of storied fame, and he loved to write about wines, all wines. When he passed away in 1998, he left three congested four-drawer filing cabinets and, on a nearby long shelf, an astounding array of various-sized volumes that were filled with cellar records and tasting notes kept since 1948. I saw it. I was there in Roy’s office to help his family arrange for his huge collection of wine labels to be sent off to UC Davis Archives and Special Collections, and I was also there to tidy up a few other cabinets of wine (“this & that” to go with them). When I saw the shelf of cellar books and the cabinets’ contents, I contacted Tom Pinney. And we created *The Brady Book: Selections from Roy Brady’s Unpublished Writings on Wine* for the benefit of the Wine Librarians Association. Esteemed Sacramento wine merchant and Roy’s friend, Darrell Corti, graciously funded the book’s production. Tom acted as editor and wrote a magnificent Introduction about Roy and his writings; I wrote a Preface and saw the book to publication with Ed Farris. It is a truly handsome book, printed in two-color with 15 hand-tipped-in color wine labels, limited to 250 hand-numbered copies bearing a tipped-in Brady bookplate on the colophon page. We purposely issued the book without a dust jacket. As Roy Brady liked to explain his library of jacketless books, “I like my women and my books bare.” I think it is one of the best books on wine ever written.

9. JB: Can you tell me about the postcard history series book you produced with Arcadia Press?

GU: This was a fun project. From 2005 to 2006, Arcadia Press and their local history books were beginning to become very popular with historical societies around the country. Today, I am sure everyone has seen a myriad of these publications. They are the perfect medium to inexpensively record and share local lore, always 128 pages filled with 200 captioned black & white photo illustrations. My idea was to do a history on Sonoma County Wineries for the benefit of the Sonoma County Wine Library, using the new Arcadia Postcard History Series (rather than photographs). My collection of early Sonoma County wine postcards was large enough to tell the story from its infancy in Sonoma City to the fun-filled Italian-Swiss Colony days in Asti and stops in between. Mike Neely, President of the Wine Library Friends, volunteered to scan the images. He was a genius at this, and so careful and organized. Arcadia had set up a stingy limit on the number of words for each caption, and I quibbled with this a bit, but to no avail. Thus, on some pages, you can see one blown-up image, the specified caption, and lots of white space. They also did not allot space for indexes. I pleaded: what use is a book like this without an index? They said, “Okay you can have 60 entries.” Of course space remains on the page for at least 20 more. Hopefully they are doing things a little differently now. Maybe I was of some influence? It is a fantastic book, crammed with many unusual postcard winery views, embellished with some surprising Sonoma County wine facts; and since we stopped our historical winery tour before the 1960s, it should never go out of date.

10. JB: What was your next wine book publication?

GU: While staying in our chronological pattern, may I interject here a significant 2007 book collection event?

11. JB: Of course, please do.

GU: Thanks. My good friend Ben Kinmont is a premier antiquarian bookseller specializing in gastronomy and wine books, and he is responsible for many cherished books in our library. One fine day in early 2007 he approached me and asked if I was interested in selling my collection of wine books. He explained that he had a buyer in France who owned a wine chateau and wanted, basically, a “ready-made, first-class” antiquarian wine book library. I said, “Ben, I’m not ready to sell the books. I need them for research and for *Wayward Tendrils,* especially the American imprints and other English-language books, at least for several more years.” Although I had never considered, or even thought about, breaking-up the library, Ron and I agreed it could make some sense to sell the “foreign books” to “the Frenchman,” as we called him. So, of the almost 4,000 volumes, Ben and I sorted out an outstanding library of almost 800 antiquarian foreign language wine books (French, Italian, German, Latin) and a selection of English titles. Included were numerous gorgeously printed early ampelographies, an invaluable collection of Cocks & Feret, extremely rare first books written on several French wine regions, German and Italian imprints from the 1500s, one incunable from 1488 whose hand-colored title page I used as the frontispiece for *Wine & Gastronomy*, and most of the classic wine authors and titles eagerly sought by wine book lovers. It was a stunning collection of books. And, amazingly, I was not as saddened by their departure as I thought I would be. I still had a growing collection of English-language treasures that filled in just fine.

Okay...on with our wine book publishing journey. In the year 2007, a wee little thing true to my heart was born. A book in miniature printed letterpress by a renowned printer, hand-bound by a master. Heavenly. My partner in this lovely book episode was Nina Wemyss, a Napa Valley-based wine historian and raconteur of the highest merit. Along with wine history, we shared a love of fine wines and fine wine books, especially miniature ones. So why not publish one!? And that is how our little gem came to be born. Nina knew Peter Koch, world recognized master printer, I knew the text we should print, my favorite passage, a chapter really, titled *Autobiography of a Vine,* from an 1866 American treatise on grape growing and wine making. In a most charming manner, the vine relates his own life story “beginning as far back as my memory goes ... when I was just a bud.” We illustrated the pages with engraved vignettes from several 19th century winegrowing books, and as a final personal touch, we hand-painted the front cover grapevine illustration. I do not think there is a more appealing salute to the vine than this brief chapter, now made into a first-class book in miniature.

Actually, this little book reminds me to mention one of my special areas of collecting: miniature wine books! “Miniature” is described in America as no larger than 3 inches in size, length or width. But of course slightly larger volumes find their way into all miniature collections, and are accepted members. I have always found collecting miniature wine books an exciting challenge; there really are not that many. Don Quixote once brilliantly stated, “Many littles make a much.” My much probably totals around 150. Early on I had decided that a wine book library should include the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, and thankfully, it is a popular subject of gifted miniature book craftsmen, so it gives me a few more books to search for. Overall, there are many clever designs for these tiny wine books, artistically executed and limited in number. My “many littles” are a great joy to behold.

Let me insert one more small area of collecting pleasure that Ron and I pursued together. (Jokingly we had divided our wine “duties” many years before: he was the wine buyer, I was the wine book buyer.) Ron has always had a keen interest in wine and health and promoting the moderate use of wine as a healthful benefit. He was welcomed into the San Francisco Society of Medical Friends of Wine, whose Founder and Executive Secretary was Leon Adams, wine writer and the ultimate promoter of wine as a healthy beverage. Naturally Ron and I began collecting the history of the Society, and scrounged everywhere (before internet) to compile a comprehensive collection of the *SMFW Bulletin*, *Quarterly* Dinner Programs, and Vintage Tour Programs. I was joyously astounded to discover that Mallette Dean, a foremost California woodcut artist and printer, had produced a long run of stunning Dinner Programs for the Society. I have no idea how Leon arranged this magnificent feat. We carefully catalogued and stored our archive, and made it available to researchers, until gratefully, it is now at home in UC Davis Archives and Special Collections. One day someone will write a book on Medical Friends of Wine.

But back again to wine book publishing. Interestingly, the last two books we reviewed and the next two I want to mention do not carry my Nomis Press imprint, the only ones I did which don’t. By the way, my printer’s mark—a stylized book/wine press—was designed and drawn by my son Joshua when I first established Nomis Press in 1990. I have always liked that. For *Autobiography of a Vine*, Nina and I formed Kylix Press to publish the book, and any subsequent ones (which we didn’t). An ancient Greek kylix drinking cup was perfect as our printer’s mark.

In 2014, out of chronological order and without a Nomis Press imprint, are two of my most unusual and truly joyful book projects, centered in Hungary! One of my biggest wine collecting passions, besides books and California Wine Postcards, is Wine Poster Stamps. These are not postage stamps and have no postal use other than to perhaps adorn an envelope to advertise a product, or a merchant, or anything, really. They date from the turn of the 20th century, are graphically beautiful and often designed by well-known collectible poster artists of the time. I don’t remember exactly when I discovered and immediately began collecting poster stamps. I know it was later, rather than sooner. But I was captivated, and the collection now has nearly 4000 poster stamps that advertise wine or wine-related products. Here’s the condensed version of this convoluted story: With my wine poster stamp collection, I was asked to help a jolly Hungarian collector and miniature book publisher put together a miniature book featuring 30 wine poster stamps, titled *WINE. On Noble Drinks: Wine, Champagne and Cognac*. I chose the stamps from my collection, sent scans, and Karoly wrote the caption text in his Hungarian-English, which I was supposed to correct. Many times I did not even know what he was trying to say, so I just wrote the caption as close to what I thought he might do in his hearty, slightly naughty way. I have never had so much crazy fun producing a book. And in the same 2014 year, I helped him edit one more wine miniature, *In Vino Veritas. Bookplates on Wine. Boros ExLibrisek*. Each bookplate illustration has its caption on the facing page, in both Hungarian and English. At least I had the Hungarian caption there to help with the English version! I have a small shelf of his other Hungarian miniature book publications that he graciously sent me—artistically very colorful, but I have no idea what they tell me.

12. JB: You began your wine writing career with an André Simon bibliography in 1990. Wasn’t your final published book also on André Simon?

GU: Yes. In 2011 I managed to come full circle. My first published work on wine, *Wine & Gastronomy*, was a bibliographic guide to Simon’s three *Bibliothecas*, *Vinaria, Gastronomica,* and *Bacchica,* the most referred-to wine book references in the world. Yet Simon’s bibliographic organization and listing of the entries was horribly frustrating. “I found it my duty,” I wrote, “in honor of M. Simon, and for my fellow wine book lovers, to combine all three bibliographies into one volume, arranged alphabetically by author, and cross-referenced by short title, date of publication, and *Bibliotheca*.” I jubilantly added, “There should never be another inaccurate case of ‘Not in Simon’ in a bookseller’s listing.” Masterful, some call it. A small tribute to a great bibliophile, I like to say. That was in 1990. Twenty-one years later, I finally published *Printer’s Ink: A Bibliographic Remembrance of André L. Simon and His Written Works*, a work that I had begun many years before. It is a favorite a book and most worthy of the long wait. From the beginning of my collecting days, I was enamored with the man André Simon (1877–1970) and his monumental outpouring of printed works on wine and gastronomy. His first book was published in 1905 and his last posthumously in 1972, with well over a hundred titles in-between. Disappointingly, my Simon collection was not complete; a couple of handfuls of small pamphlets had eluded me. I made several trips to England hoping to find these missing souls—I searched the British Library (nothing) and the Guildhall (nothing); met with dear Hugo Dunn-Meynell of Simon’s Wine & Food Society (nothing). But Hugo introduced me to Simon’s gracious granddaughter with whom I spent several days exploring the family bookcase and boxes from the attic (we found only a few, but a very special few, and gave me a precious life-time memory). In *Printer’s Ink* — the title taken from Simon’s first book where he professed his first love was printer’s ink — I wanted to present an honored memory of Simon through his writings, a “bibliographic remembrance” of “when, and why, and how, and who.” My designed format was one book per page, with a proper, but brief, bibliographic description, followed by a paragraph describing the times and the people behind the book, and the why; each entry was closed with a favorite quote from the book printed alongside a color photograph of the book. Ed Farris transformed my vision into one-hundred-and-eighty-four pages of beautiful splendor. It was the perfect “last” book.

Well, it almost was. It actually was the last book for a “commercial” Nomis Press, but one more would display the Nomis Press imprint and be seen to press by Ed Farris Graphics. A private book, not for sale. In 2016, when it was arranged for our houseful of wine books—the Unzelman Collection of some 3,000 items—to be purchased by H. William Harlan (Bill) and live in a stately Library Room at his new Promontory Winery in Napa Valley, I told Bill that before I sent the books to him I wanted to write a collection catalogue. Many of these books and pamphlets had lived with us going on fifty years and almost all of them had a story to tell. Their esteemed stature deserved such an honor, a tribute, you might say, for the pleasure they had brought us. So, section by section, shelf by shelf, I pulled each book, revisited it, and remembered its story, and recorded it. Photographs of the books were taken and included. Some alone, some in groups, title pages or illustrations from others, or any highlight the book advised would be perfect to be remembered by. I love this book: *The Unzelman Library Catalogue: A Bacchic Feast*. *Interspersed with sundry anecdotes and reminiscences, embellished with over 700 illustrations.* Since UCD Special Collections has been given a copy of the Catalogue, it probably isn’t necessary to elaborate here on the splendid treasures in the Unzelman Library. But it would be fun to briefly highlight a few “shelf shiners,” if you won’t mind. There are the several historically important, rare “Collections,” including the “Inglenook Collection,” “California Board of State Viticultural Commissioners Collection,” “UC College of Agriculture: 19th C Viticulture Bulletins/Reports Collection,” “André L. Simon Collection,” “George Husmann Collection,” “George Saintsbury Collection.” Equally of remarkable rarity and historical value are a number of “firsts” — the first American printing on the vine & wine (Antill, 1771), America’s first published book on wine (Adlum, 1823), the five cornerstones of California wine literature (Haraszthy, Hyatt, Husmann, Rixford, Wait), the first California publication on Phylloxera (Hilgard, 1876), and numerous “firsts” from other historical winegrowing states. And, although it was published in London in 1772, Louis de St Pierre’s amazingly rare early wine treatise was written for American winegrowers, and this copy carries a heartwarming Sonoma Valley provenance of two California pioneer winemen. On the shelf, the *Catalogue* lends a distinguished presence: 8.5 x11 inches, bound in rich, dark royal blue cloth with a gilt-stamped spine. There are 494 pages, plus 14 pp of Book Values and 14 pp of Index. A magnificent personal library catalogue, yet it should endure to be of great significance to the worldwide realm of wine books. The books are proud of this.

What do you think? More questions? Anything we didn’t cover? If not, maybe we can conclude with a few thoughts recently generated from that 1990 *Wine Spectator* article I showed you earlier?

13. JB: Yes, let’s conclude with final thoughts.

GU: Twenty years ago *Wine Spectator* planned to do an article for their Christmas 1990 issue on “Wine Books As Collectibles” and contacted me (and Ron) to be featured with our library. We both knew the underlying scheme of this over-sized glossy magazine: wine was constantly presented as an investment. We could guess the theme of collecting wine books. Our library of wine books had never been developed with an eye to investment. The books were collected, really with a twofold purpose, to preserve them and have them available for study. Maybe we could use the article to illustrate this, and not emphasize money&price&value. We mulled it over. *Wayward Tendrils* had just been organized, and the *Spectator* promised to hail this achievement. As much as I was against participating, I was hopeful. In the end, I think it was a good decision. Journalist Steve Heimhoff had thoughtfully interviewed us and booksellers and collectors whom I knew to be truly passionate about wine books, and he had written a terrific article (even with the prices highlighted throughout). Ron and I were featured in front of our large bookcase, Ron holding, in an open position, the rarest of books, Bosqui’s 1877 chromolithographic masterpiece, *Grapes and Grape Vines of California*. (One of only 9 known copies of this premier California book, it was extra special to us because it had been Leon Adams’s copy, bought personally from him, to evermore breathe the aroma of his ever-present pipe.) Following the appearance of the *Spectator* article, I sensed a supreme new chapter in my life. *Wine & Gastronomy* had been published, WT had been launched, and the years ahead were going to be dedicated to maximizing the Unzelman Library for its intended purpose — learning and teaching and sharing. A lovely blessing.