

Alegría Vineyards History

- 1841** The Mexican government granted the Sotoyome Rancho to Henry Delano Fitch, a Boston sea captain who had become a Mexican citizen and merchant in San Diego. The Rancho's 48,837 acres included what are now Alegría Vineyards and the City of Healdsburg.
- 1852** The Brumfield family from Virginia settled on part of the Sotoyome Rancho that includes Alegría Vineyards. Like everyone in Healdsburg, they were squatters on the Rancho.
- 1857** After a land commission confirmed Josefa Fitch's title to the Sotoyome Rancho, the Brumfields purchased 850 acres.
- 1868** Bill's maternal great-great grandparents purchased a home in Windsor. Windsor's population was about 150. It seems likely they were acquainted with the Brumfields living only two miles north of them. Also in 1868, Bill's paternal great-great grandparents settled in Petaluma, farther south in Sonoma County.
- 1886** A California State Viticultural Commission survey listed the Brumfields as growers of Zinfandel and Mission grapes.
- 1890** Summers Brumfield planted a vineyard of about 10 acres, as a field blend. (We later called it Alegría Vineyards.)
- 1897** Bill's grandfather, Jacob Nachbaur, was working in Napa Valley vineyards
- 1896 – 1924** Elizabeth Legel Moes, who was born in Paris, France, acquired 42.5 acres, including the vineyard, builds a small winery on the property, and maintained the vineyard for 28 years. A railroad siding adjacent to the vineyard was used during Prohibition for loading grapes to be sold in San Francisco.
- 1924-1943** Mrs. Moe's daughter, Ernestine, and son-in-law Adolph Dinucci maintained the vineyard for 21 years.
- 1943-1950** The vineyard property passed through several hands [Reynaud, Pavone, Mericone, and Mohr].
- 1950** Americo Rafanelli purchased the vineyard and re-plants 1.5 acres, adding Sangiovese to the field blend.
- 1951 - 1973** Arnold Bruschera, a retired candy maker from Chicago, bought the property and maintained the vineyard for 22 years.
- 1960** The State of California acquired 7.74 acres from the Bruscheras to build US 101.
- 1973 – 1990** The Allen family, originally from Arkansas, purchased the property [except for one acre retained by the Bruscheras] and maintained the vineyard for 17 years. They sold the grapes to Gallo as "mixed blacks".
- 1990- Present** Betsy and Bill Nachbaur acquired the property [except for 1.3 acres retained by the Allens]. Now reduced to 32 acres, the property includes 7 acres of the old field-blend vineyard and 1.5 acres replanted by Jim Allen in 1987. Bill identified the 18 varieties in the old vineyard, planted new field blends on the 17 acres next to the original vineyard, and continues to expanded the old field blend tradition into the 21st century. There are now more than 60 varieties planted in Alegría Vineyards, all of which are included in ACORN'S Medley wine. In 1994, the Nachbours produced their first ACORN wine, a Sangiovese.