

February 9th, 2004

Back from some rest in the alps, some holidays, christmas, the new year and some busy days in the office, getting things going again. We seem to have a good start so far, since two excellent reports on our wines came in.

The Wine Spectator Weekly of Jan. 8.2004 gave 97 points to our 2002 Rudesheim Berg Schlossberg Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese and you can assume that we are extremely pleased with this score. "Absolutely pure in flavor, harmonious and well-proportioned in its architecture, this TBA seems lighter than air, yet packs intense flavors of apricot, lemon candy and mineral. it maintains a sense of terroir, despite its sweetness. Great length. Drink now through 2030."

At the same time David Schildknecht in his highly respected annual column in the International Wine Cellar Newsletter writes: "Bernhard Breuer turned in a formidable collection this year."

He has given many 2 stars to our wines.

These reports are amplified by heavy ordering from many parts of the domestic and international market. I had already visitors from England and Belgium, seeing us in the first full week of the year and we have also put the finishing touches to the organisation of the forthcoming Rheingau Gourmet Festival, that will start at the end of february – see under [www.rheingau-gourmet-festival.de](http://www.rheingau-gourmet-festival.de). The booking at this stage are better than in the past. That is a good sign.

I will leave in two days for South Africa together with Bernd Philippi to blend the 2002 vintage of Mont du Toit which will be bottled before the new vintage of 2004 will be coming in.

February 12th, 2004

I am sitting in my room at Hotel Lindrum ( 26 Flinders St. - <http://www.hotellindrum.com.au> – which I can recommend for its beautiful design ) in Melbourne, on the brink of leaving the town for Sydney for a winemakers dinner with our Australian importer and a presentation on Friday for the trade.

This after a two day Riesling summit, the third, organized by the Frankland Estate from Western Australia and their passionate owners, Judy Cullem and Barrie Smith.

Workshops, dinner, presentation and a grand Riesling Tasting were at the core of this event.

I have noted the following wines to be the best in each of the five flights served during the International Riesling Tasting (a total of 37 wines were tasted).

Flight 1: 2002 Kastanienbusch from Hansjörg Rebholz in Front of 2001 Schloss Gobelsburg Alte Reben  
Flight 2: 2001 Berg Schlossberg from Georg Breuer (sorry for mentioning our own wine, but since I took the notes without knowing the wines in this blind tasting, I might do so for once) in front of 2001 Centrafenberg from Paul Fürst  
Flight 3: 2002 Watervale Mount Horrocks in front of 2001 Spitzer Smaragt from Hirzberger  
Flight 4: 2001 Niederhäuser Hermanshöhle from Dönnhoff (for me the best wine of the whole tasting) in front of 2001 Dürnsteiner Schütt from Knoll  
Flight 5: Kallstadter Saumagen of Bernd Philippi in front of 2001 Senftenberg from Nigl and 2001 Klaus from Prager of Weissenkirchen.

February 13th, 2004

I am in the air now for one hour after our trade presentation today in Sydney and was than driven by the latest Rolls Royce Phantom to the airport. What a treat and co-incidence. The co-proprietaire of Champagne Jacquesson, a wine I really became to like throughout these last days, who has been with us on tour and who happens to know the Australian importer of Rolls Royce, Aston Martin and BMW because he supplies his champagne to all Aston Martin dealers around the world, met with him this morning and he offered us this exceptional trip to the Airport together with a driver. It is really a super car. You sit there in a comfort that almost beats the best chairs you have at home and there does not seem to be any noise from the engine. Most features are activated by voice control. I think they call this "travel in style".

I am glad to be on my way home now. Because 10 days is really a long time to be away for me. I like to remain close to my wines and the vineyards. It is a feeling that seems to grow on me with age.

Last night some of my german colleagues, still remaining with me in Australia, Ernie Loosen, Fritz Hasselbach, Reinhardt and Conny Löwenstein, chaired a wine maker dinner for the finest wine shop in town, the Ultimo Wine Centre at the Coco Roco Restaurant at 17 Lime Street in King Street Wharf ( see <http://www.cocoroco.com.au> for more information ). I happily confess that this was the finest meal on the trip. Go there if you are in Sydney next. They really use the finest produce and treat in a style that leaves the full natural aromas alive, yet allow for a lightness of the food that is gorgeous. Let me just fill you in with the menu to make your mouth watering: Fromage Blanc, tomato confit, tomato jelly, salted cucumber and baby shiso; Sashimi of Yellow Fin Tuna, confit octopus, egg plant, waterchestnuts and young coconut; Sea urchin ravioli, Eden mussels, black funghi, baby spring onions and shaved salsify; Pan roasted snapper, white asparagus,

shaved cuttlefish and herb butter and for dessert: Cherry panna-cotta with green tea icecream.  
The chef is Steve Burman.

Still the Rockpool is the restaurant everybody is raving about and their sommelier today just ordered some of my wines for their wine list. Good news.

It may seem to the regular readers of this diary, that I have not been very much at writing since the beginning of the year. It is true, that I just did not find the time, as much as I used to. So I will give you a quick account, what I did in the first 5 weeks of the year.

Skiing over the New Year in the French alps. Good snow and weather conditions.

Visit of a number of customers in the week after my return from Munich, Cologne and London.

Visit in Kanzem to oversee the turnout of the 2003 vintage of Weingut Von Othegraven (it looks extremely promising after a truly very satisfying 2002 vintage, which elevated the estate further in the rankings of most wine guides).

Annual shareholder meeting with my colleagues from DieGueter, our german sales organisation.

Annual meeting of Pro Tunnel, our local pressure group, which I am leading for the last 20 years, to finally push for the so much needed construction of a tunnel for the railway in Rüdenheim, so that the again the town will gain access to the River and the constant queues at the railway crossing (over 8 hours a day) will finally cease.

Travel to South Africa, to oversee the final blending of the 2002 vintage at Mont du Toit and prepare the plans for the forthcoming vintage.

Annual Spanish wine dinner with my personal friends and wines from 5 decades, mostly from the the Rioja. Again the 1952 of Muga showed as one of the finest wines.

Travel to Berlin, to visit the market with a wine maker dinner at the Hyatt Hotel, continuation to Hamburg with a winemaker dinner to the asian food of Indochine, a restaurant chain, spreading out of Singapore.

Presentation of our wines from the Rheingau and the Douro at the Consorzio wineclub in Wiesbaden.

Presentation of our wines at the vernissage in Düsseldorf of Tom Christophers (from New York)

newest paintings at the newly opened Barbara von Stechow galerie followed by the departure for Hongkong and Australia on the next day.

Tomorrow night, on the 14th, will be our annual rare wine tasting with Rheingau Riesling dating back to 1904 and the next morning will see me depart for a short trip to the south of France , where our French importer in Béziers has his annual trade presentation.

February 17th, 2004

Back from a trip to see customers in the west of our country directly following my return from France, I would like to show you the menu we had on monday night cooked for us and some guests of the presentation by a number of french michelin star chefs. It was superb cuisine. One of the very best I had in years in France:

Liégeois d'huitres, crémeux de choux fleur au cumin by Jean Marc Boyer from Le Puits du Trésor (<http://www.lepuitsdutresor.fr> ) in L' Aude Brandade de morue et effilochée de seiche en salade d'herbette aux aromates by Patrik Olry and Sandrine Llambias from Ambassade in Béziers Gaufre tiède et Saint-Jacques, crème aigre aux suc de poiré by Franck Quinton from Le Manoir du Lys ([www.manoir-du-lys.fr](http://www.manoir-du-lys.fr) ) in Normandy Bar "Bazar" déleri et citron confit by Didier Clement from Le Lion d'Or at in the Loire region in Romorantin ([www.hotel.liondor.fr](http://www.hotel.liondor.fr) ). Fricasée de sot-l'y-laises et queues d'écrevisses aux herbes Thai by Stephane Rimbault from der L'Oasis at Napoules Carré d'agneau "Axuria", son piquillos, purée d'harictos à l'huile d'olive, jus tranché au pesto von Pierre Etchemaitre from the Restaurant Etchemaitre and Pierre Chilo aus Chez Chilo, from from two french basque restaurants ([www.hotel-etchemaitre.fr](http://www.hotel-etchemaitre.fr) and [www.hotel-chilo.fr](http://www.hotel-chilo.fr) close to Barcus). Minestrone de fruits exotiques, mousse de mangue, jus au gigembre et brisures de crumble by Xavier Pilet and finally Feuille Chocolat et glace pistache again by Jean Marc Boyer from Le puits du Trésor.

Another interesting development. We have just received the first Polish Wine Guide, which also incorporates with a very good rating our estate.

February 21th, 2004

Tomorrow I will leave for Gerona in Spain (Catolonia) to visit with our spanish importer. this market is developping very positively. There is excellent gastronomie in this country coupled with a growing interest in also other than spanish wines. I look forward to this visit.

March 3rd, 2004

I just came back from the Pro Wein weekend, which was preceded by the Wine Awards Gala Evening at the Schlosshotel Bensberg organized by Germany's leading wine magazine WEIN GOURMET a sister publication of DER FEINSCHMECKER. In Hollywood style, "... and the winner is..." awards were given to leading international growers. Paul Fürst received the "Oscar" for the best German performance of a grower. Stuart Pigott presented him. Alfred Bielek presented Herr Ballhaus "the eye of Hollywood") as Gourmet of the year. Jena Michel Cazes received the lifetime achievement award.. Jim Clendenen became winemaker of the year against hard competition from Didier Dagenau, Reinhard Löwenstein, Manfred Krankl, Reinhold Krutzler, Luigi Mancini, Hervé Bizeul, Willi Bründelmayer, Peter Sissek and Paolo de Marchi from Isole e Olena. Joao Ramos Portugal became Newcomer of the Year and I was asked to present him. What followed was a long night followed by a good sleep in the beautiful rooms of the Chateau-Hotel.

A few days earlier I returned from my trip to Spain, where I participated in the annual presentation of our importer Vins Alemanys, together with an "Armada" of Creme de la Creme German colleagues. Over 150 restaurateurs and sommeliers came to the event. It was a great success and German Riesling are starting to find a home in the finest wine lists of the peninsula. In the evening at Can Roca in Gerona, a two star Michelin Restaurant, we were spoiled by the Roca brothers with a fantastic menu, accompanied by well chosen wines. Here is a quick run down of the menu:

Tapas: Sardines with "piquillo" pimento and black olives nougat; Bloody Marx; Squids parmentier.  
Menu: Anchovies, truffle and Merlot; Artichokes with foie gras soup, orange and truffle's oil; Blue fish "verat" with vapour of Poire Williams; Sea Perch with almonds and "Gentine"; Ooyal of hare.  
Desserts: Colration: Green; Soufflé-Coulant of Chocolate. The wines: Capuchino "30 anos" by Pedro Domecq; Pazo de Senorans "Albarino 1999; DO Ferreira "Cepas Velhas", 2001 from Rias Baixas, 2001 Doix from Priorat and a superb 1986 Magnum of Vega Sicilia, 2002 Morstein "S" from Wittmann and Noe de Gonzales Byass. No more words required, just enjoy.

Tomorrow the 8th Rheingau Gourmet and Wine Festival will start. Find out about the program under (<http://www.rheingau-gourmet-festival.de> ). There will not be much time left for me during that period to work on the diary.

March 24th, 2004

In the fast train from Hamburg to Frankfurt this morning. Only one stop. From the flat of my daughter to the office in Rüdesheim, it takes only 5 hours. And it is comfortable.

Since the last report in the diary quite some time has passed. I have been travelling quite a lot for one thing and on the other hand our eighth Rheingau Gourmet & Wein Festival, which lasted for 10 days and has been the most successful so far, has taken an immense amount of time.

We had 4 of the total of 5 three Michelin Star german chefs (Harald Wohlfahrt, Dieter Müller, Jean Claude Bourgeuil and Heinz Winkler ) in the Rheingau, 2 two star chefs, promising young chefs, that are aiming to become one day part of the 3 star range (Thomas Bühner from La Table in Hohensyburg – close to Dortmund and Joachim Wissler from Hotel Bensberg – close to Bonn). Cal Staminov from Bernardus Lodge in California has been back, an old friend, who prepared a marvellous course "lamb on fenchel". Joachim Gratwohl and Christian Petz, where he is the trend-setter at the moment in the newly opened Palais cooked very much an authentic regional style, Bobby Breuer did a lunch at the Breuer (ours) winery, still in Düsseldorf, he will shortly move to Berlin to become the chef at the Quadriga, a Michelin star restaurant in the famous Hotel Brandenburger Hof.

The chef of the Kronenschlösschen in Hattenheim, where most events took place, did a marvellous job, was always present, prepared many courses himself and it seems to me that he has made a jump forward in his own work with his team. That can be said also for the service team under the guidance of Herr Hagen.

Prominent tastings were another facette of this festival. The list of the names of the proponent will speak for itself: Dirk van der Niepoort (100 years of port, a colheita tasting), Miguel Roquette (Quinta do Crasto), Francisco Olazabal (Quinta do Vale Meao), Christiano van Zeller (Quinta do Vale Dona Maria), Francisco Ferreira (Quinta do Vallado) – all part of the emerging league of the finest portugese wine producers, whose wines from autochtonous grape variety have a huge future in my opinion in the world market, were often the uniformness of Cabernet, Merlot and Syrah rule.

Joachim Heger, Maike Näkel, Knipser, Paul Fürst, Franz Keller, August Kessler, Peter Jacob Kühn among others stood for a spendid range of german Pinot Noirs, were quality standarts have risen to new hights.

Raphaella Bologna, the charismatic woman from Piemonte, Stephan Graf Neipperg with a fascinating vertical tasting of 6 vintages of Mondotte, Marquese Guerreri Gonzaga from San Leonardo in Trento and Marquese Francesco Mazzei from Castello di Fonterutoli in Chianti Classico.

A rare vertical tasting 1979 to 1997 from Roederer Cristal, whoow!!! Tasting of wine great classic burgundies from Comte de Vogué, 50 austrian estates showed their wines, among them, Hirzberger, Knoll, F.X.Pichler, Kracher, Alziner, Bründlmayer, Loimer, Graf Hardegg, Paul Achs, Heinrich, Gsellmann, Kollwentz, Umathum, Markowitz, Tement, Schwarz, Sattlerhof, Polz and others. 10 TBA's from Kracher, back to 1981. Marcel Deiss and Domaine de Trevallon. Impressed? Definitely our 3500 guests in total for the 10 days were.

I worked the last two days the market in Sylt, the famous german north sea island, which by the way also gave me the chance on two consecutive mornings to jog on the beach. The gulf stream really guarantees for mild temperatures most of the time in this resort next to Danmark. The day before I presented our wines in Belgium and had a winemakers dinner in Antwerp and in the middle of last week I spent to days in Norway and found the restaurant Credo in Trondheim with a fabulous wines list and a great chef, Heidi, a revelation. Look at their home page and click to the wine list at the bottom of the page (<http://www.restaurantcredo.no>).

April 12th, 2004

Some days of rest over Easter in my beloved mountain resort in France. There is ample of snow. Exceptional for this late date in the season. It started with two days of snowfall, but only to be compensated by one of the best skiing days ever. Easter Sunday. Yesterday. It continued with very good conditions today. But nothing can beat a sunny day after fresh snow.

I will depart again after four intensive days of relaxing, with freshly recharged batteries.

Exactly a week ago, I presented for the first time the label of the 2002 Berg Schlossberg, in the presence of the artist Jan Fabre to the Belgian press in the Pastorale Restaurant near Antwerp. The chef prepared a beautiful lunch and we enjoyed a small vertical tasting of Berg Schlossberg back to 1982.

By the end of this week, I will leave together with Werner Näkel, for our Quinta in the Douro to bottle the 2002 Ardosino, our second vintage of this wine and oversea the continuation of the construction work done. Hopefully, we can soon move in.

April 27th, 2004

It is more than a month ago, since I last took the trouble to write my diary notes. In the meantime you have eventually noticed, that we have been working on the web-site to ease the up-dating. I would like to wrap up this period in a few sentences, even though it has been equally busy than the beginning of the year. Late in March I tasted through all the Riesling barrels of the 2003 vintage in the cellar and it confirmed to me the freshness of the wines despite the somewhat lower acidity. But this is more than compensated by the richness of the flavours and length of taste. Travel to Munich for a wine presentation at Dallmayr, one of the most respected Delikatessen shops in the country. Visit of WineArt, the most important Japanese Wine Magazine for a tasting and photosession. An article on Riesling to appear in June of this year. Travel to some west German customers to finish up for the weekend in Baden to visit my good friend Joachim Heger. Planning of our traditional annual trip with personal friends to a yet rarely visited spot in Europe. It will become a combination of Elsass, Baden, Bündner Herrschaft (in Switzerland close to Lichtenstein) and Zurich.

First presentation of the 2002 Berg Schlossberg label together with the personal appearance of famous Belgian multi-talented artist Jan Fabre in the top restaurant Pastorel close to Antwerp. Get-together at Paul Fürst, the famous Frankonian Redwine maker and this year's Der Feinschmecker German Wine Maker of the Year to an informal evening with colleagues and German's most wellknown talkshow host Dr. Alfred Biölek ("Bio") an avid amateur of German Wines. Two days later departure for a short holiday in the French alps, where a abundance of snow could still be found. Four days of skiing like in a paradise.

Back at home the only Scandinavian Master of Wine, Arne Ronold, visited with his wine students for an in depth tasting. An evening later, birthday dinner with a close personal friend, HB Ullrich, the owner of famed Kronenschlösschen in Hattenheim with some memorable Bordeaux to share. The next evening departure for Portugal to visit our Quinta da Carvalhosa. Bottling of the 2002 vintage. We decided to bottle only Ardosino from this vintage and sacrificed even the finest barrels made in order to increase the quality of this blend. It was a costly but worthwhile decision in the interest of our customers. We also slept for the first time in the almost finished rooms at the newly erected house at the Quinta.

Return in the middle of last week and departure one day later for Japan, from where I am now writing these lines. I start my ten day trip in Osaka with our importer, a dedicated family to the cause of German wines. Seminars, wine maker dinners, all a bit different in the ceremonial aspect than in other parts of the world, but mind you the Japanese people I am meeting are very

friendly, interested and are warm and have a good hearth. I am feeling very much at home here. We had two private fabulous meals with genuine Japanese cuisine and whoever has said, only sweet german wine would go with these dishes is completely wrong. It is the dry wines that do well. The food is so much based on natural produce, mostly fish and vegetable, so that these wines are the logical compliment to them. We started off this "tour de restaurants" two nights ago in a small very personally kept place called "tomo", after the chef Tomohiko Yamaguchi in Irabaki near Osaka (Settsu-shi Senriokahigashi 3-10-10 – Tel. 072-623-0701) and followed up with a very traditional meal in one of the finest Japanese restaurants there is "Minosaryoh" in the Mino district near North Osaka ([www.minohsaryoh.co.jp](http://www.minohsaryoh.co.jp); Tel. 072 729-5057)). The sublime food is still served on the knees by in kimono dressed service and the pottery used, different with every dish, is the finest you can image. As the other night, we tried the combination with food and good sake and it does not take long to get used to this age-old tradition.

May 26th, 2004

There will be no further record in Bernhard Breuer's diary. Our father died in the early hours of May 20th. We are very sad, and at a loss to find words to express our feelings. At the same time we know that it is our duty to continue Bernhard Breuer's great heritage within our family, this is a great vision to work for.

Dear Bernhard, words cannot express what we feel.

In deepest love, Theresa and Marcia Breuer.