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Bonny and Justin Meyer at the entrance to Bonny's Vineyard in Oakville in the 1970s.

Bonny's Vineyard Cab Is Back

The fruit from four hallowed acres of prime Oakville Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard has been brought back as Bonny's Vineyard Cabernet and will be released August 30 for the first time in 12 years.

The vineyard, the wine and the family who makes it are iconic in the Napa Valley.

Bonny Meyer, one of the founders of Silver Oak Cellars in 1972, has collaborated with her winemaker son, Matt, to produce 200 cases of 100 percent Cab in the same elegant, food-friendly, lower-alcohol style that defines the wine-making legacy of their late husband and father, Justin Meyer.

Bonny's Vineyard was originally planted in 1974 by Justin as a gift to Bonny. Situated in front of the Meyer family home on a gravelly spot adjacent to Conn Creek on the valley floor in Oakville, not far from the Silver Oak winery, Bonny's Vineyard produced the fruit that Justin made into a memorable string of Silver Oak vintages over the course of two

decades.

From 1979-1991 the wine developed a loyal following and a reputation for its dark intense fruit and at time controversial notes of bell pepper and eucalyptus.

After the 1991 harvest Justin made the decision that Silver Oak would no longer produce a single vineyard wine from the family vineyard. Bonny's Vineyard Cab's popularity had become problematic because there wasn't enough of it to go around, and many avid followers of the winery wound up disappointed year after year.

The vineyard was replanted in 1999 to 100 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, Clone 8.

Even after selling their half of Silver Oak in 2001, the one vineyard the Meyer Family retained was Bonny's. And with the 2003 harvest Bonny's Vineyard is back.

"It gives me a lot of joy to be doing a wine with my son," said Bonny, who now divides
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Bonny and Matt Meyer at the entrance to Bonny's Vineyard in Oakville in 2008.

Bonny's Back . . .

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her time between the family home in Oakville and a houseboat in Sausalito.

She is the principal of Meyer Family Enterprises, investor in the financial markets, commercial property and green technologies. Bonny is a strategic philanthropist and a community activist and enjoys sailing, skiing and music. Now and then she has been known to drive fast when no one is looking.

Bringing the wine that bears her name back has entailed a waiting period of five years.

After the initial harvest on September 18, 2003, 34 months of maturation on 100 percent new American Oak and bottling two years ago, the first tastings of the mother-son version of Bonny's Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon are on target.

The intent is for the wine to be elegant and balanced, not extracted, said Matt.

Bonny said their first release

stood up well in a recent blind tasting among other highly-regarded local Cabs.

Matt and his family live in the Mendocino region, in Yorkville, where he also produces Syrah and Port under the Meyer Family Cellars label.

Bonny and Justin's other son, Chad, and his family, recently moved from Yountville to the Silverado area, where they are involved in wine marketing and consulting.

An active reserve list for Bonny's Vineyard is forming through the website, www.bonnysvineyard.com. There is a three-bottle limit, and the Bonny's is priced at \$135 per bottle.