

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## Burgess Cellars Celebrates 45 Years with Extensive Tasting Event

Napa Valley, California - September 6, 2017 - Burgess Cellars marks its 45th anniversary this year as a family owned, mountain winery. The family is opening the cellar, and over two dozen vintages spanning the winery's lifetime will be featured at the '45th Anniversary Celebration & Library Tasting' on November 3rd in Saint Helena.

Army pilot and Ohioan Tom Burgess (1939-2017) founded Burgess Cellars in 1972 when he purchased a 19th century winery and vineyard on the Howell Mountain hillside. Tom's son and current President Steven Burgess reflected on that big year, "I cannot imagine the stress that my parents went through in '72. They moved out from New York, bought the winery, renovated it."

The big news: "They were pregnant with me. The sense of urgency with harvest coming and a baby coming was a big deal. During our first harvest, there was actually some Cabernet and Petite Sirah picked the day I was born."

There were only two dozen or so wineries in Napa and the early years were difficult. "My father's first business trips were definitely awakenings. He'd walk into a store and people wouldn't even try wines from California, let alone Napa Valley. They'd never heard of it," Burgess said.

Perhaps it was Tom flying salespeople over his vineyards in his Marchetti airplane, or his on-the-ground hard work, but Tom opened up new markets throughout the nation. The winery and Napa Valley grew. A milestone in the 1990s made this clear: Tom found himself presenting a wine dinner with Julia Child.

Years after sons James and Steven learned to drive from the vineyard team on the Howell Mountain hillsides, they became President and Vineyard Manager in 2012. Steven Burgess said of becoming a second-generation vintner, "earning the right to run the winery, it really took a long slow steady process. There's a lot of metaphors there to making great wine."

One of their first moves was bringing winemaker Kelly Woods on board. The UC Davis alum brought a refreshed approach to the historic winery, with customized fermentation for each vineyard block and a barrel program more in tune with big mountain fruit.

"All the pieces are in place. We've got my brother managing the vineyard, Kelly Woods in the cellar, we've got a wonderful new label that tells the story. Being part of a hillside mountain vineyard in the Napa Valley, with consumers really getting more interested in small family business, authenticity, genuine products... what we produce is what the future wants."

A festive evening of wine tasting hosted by Burgess personalities, past and present, takes place November 3rd, 7-9pm, at Farmstead in Saint Helena. Two dozen vintages spanning 45 years will be opened at the '45th Anniversary Celebration & Library Tasting'. An anniversary story video, tickets and information are at: <http://burgesscellars.com/45th-anniversary/>

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To cover this event or for more information, winery visit, or photo/video assets:

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5-minute video, shot on location at the Burgess Cellars hillside vineyard, of Steven Burgess sharing thoughts and memories on this milestone: <https://youtu.be/QviPqVqSBis>