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COMMUNITY



photo by Julie Iverson
 Terry Bremner has renovated an 88th Street farm and turned it into Westbrook Winery. The operation, which opened last week, creates a variety of fruit wines and pure fruit juices.

Reaping the fruits of his labour

by Matthew Hoekstra

Ask Terry Bremner about his new winery, and he'll talk about ruby red cranberries, rich blueberries and uncompromising taste.

He might also talk about the Grouse Grind.

The 44-year-old longtime Ladner resident has many stories about running up the side of a mountain, a fitting metaphor for a berry farmer turned winery proprietor.

He was disappointed at last year's decision to cancel the Grouse Grind race due to a high forest fire risk. He had hoped organizers would simply postpone the annual challenge.

After all, he had running to do.

Instead, Bremner poured his energy into restoring buildings on a historic farm in East Ladner, an effort that lasted years and paid off last week when he opened the doors to the on-farm Westbrook Winery.

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The project stole time away from his mountain treks , and will continue to as Bremner keeps developing his business dream.

"You sort of have an idea, a vision, and once you get going, you want to do good."

The farm once belonged to the Huff family. Seymore and Maggie Huff built a farmhouse and two barns and lived on the property for decades. Grandson Gordon Huff last owned the 88th Street farm before Bremner bought it.

It's a property Bremner knows well. In his youth, he delivered newspapers to farmers on the rural road. Hence, why years later he easily looked past the decaying buildings and saw only a restored heritage farm.

Not everyone shared his enthusiasm.

Some people recommended bulldozing the listing, 100-year-old junk-filled structures.

"I don't see negatives," Bremner explained. "Anytime there's something not right, I find a positive in it."

Today, the big barn, farmhouse and granary are mostly restored.

The granary has now become a retail shop and tasting room, rivalling space showcased in popular decorating magazines. The original floors have been polished and the uninsulated walls have a fresh look.

Amid dark heritage beams and wooden shelves hawking Bremner's other pride , pure blueberry and cranberry juice , a dim lit bar advertises a product found only at one other Delta farm: fruit wines.

Westbrook Winery's table wine offerings include blueberry, cranberry, strawberry, white cranapple and peach apricot. A bottle costs \$13.

Along with an iced apple wine, three fortified wines are also featured: blueberry, cranberry and peach apricot. Each bottle costs \$19.

All are fruit born from years of planning and regulatory process. Once the winery opened with little fanfare last week, customers began to arrive; most pulled in from an on-farm sign visible from highways 10 and 99.

The berries come from Bremner's properties in Fort Langley and East Delta. The wine is crafted directly on the farms.

Bremner is hardly relishing the quiet of his winery's first days in business. He's readying the farm for a grand-opening event, and already has designs on the farm's future: a destination for visitors.

A pumpkin patch, farm animals, hay rides, a demonstration farm, berry sales and an antique shop are just some things visitors may see down the road at the winery.

"I have my own ideas, and I am just working with my own ideas ... but at times I think I have too many ideas," he said.

Bremner also plans to expand his selection of wines, expecting to be selling grape wines within two years.

Westbrook Winery is located at 4626-88th St. It is open Monday to Friday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Call 604-946-1868.

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