

Betreff: Hello from Neudorf to Neudorf
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Hi,

this is just to say hello from Neudorf, Germany, to Neudorf, New Zealand. We have something in common: The name and a passion for wine-making. But we are half a world apart as well.....

Let me introduce ourselves. We live in Neudorf (meaning: "new village"). This isn't really a precise information, because Neudorfs are ubiquitous in Germany: Wikipedia lists more than 50 of them, mostly as parts of larger towns or villages. Our Neudorf belongs to Wächtersbach and is located in the German federal state of Hessen, about 60 kilometers to the east of Frankfurt.

But what about wine-making? If you are familiar with wine-making in Germany and locate our village on the map, you'll easily find out that Neudorf is at least 50 kms apart from the nearest place, where wine-making is allowed. Moreover, there hasn't been any wine-making here for the last 150 to 200 years. On the other hand there is evidence that wine-making has been common in our area in past centuries: Some local places bear the word "Wingert" (meaning: "wine garden") in their name. The final proof for early wine-making in Neudorf was found by the late Gerhard Seitz. When studying old documents from historical archives, he found several references of wine being produced and traded in our location. This brought him to the idea of re-establishing the wine-making in Neudorf. In 2006, he spread the idea among his friends and convinced quite a number of them to start the adventure.

And an adventure it was: Living in Germany, you can't simply plant some vines and start, because wine-making is strictly regulated. In our Neudorf, professional wine-making is forbidden anyway. And for amateurs, there are strict rules. Among them:

- Any single individual must not cultivate more than 100 square meters.
- You need a permit from state authorities.
- Wine produced must not be sold, but can only be given away for free. (Of course, you may drink it yourself!)

But Gerhard overcame all obstacles, found two friends and a plot on the slope of a hill above our village. Finally Gerhard and his friends planted about 180 vines of variety Johanner in May 2007. In March 2008 a registered association was founded: Weinfreunde Neudorf eV (meaning: Friends of Wine Neudorf). In October 2008 we harvested our first grape juice: A mere 20 liters. This produced something similar to wine, but a majority of our members simply kept their bottle as a souvenir. With growing experience and growing wines, the result became much more drinkable. And vintages 2013 and 2014 are simple, but reasonable products. We also produced a Grappa-like brand, which was really tasteful. The outlook for the 2015 wine is positive!

Also in late 2008 we decided to publish our own website www.neudorf-mkk.de. Since I'm much better in IT than in growing plants, I volunteered as webmaster. In the following years, our website extended its reach beyond Weinfreunde Neudorf eV to become something like a local event announcement board, a local news magazine, and kind of archive for stories about local events. Maybe you'll find some time to explore our website. And even though there is no English content, there are many photos, and with a little help from some friends (i.e. Google Translate) you can certainly find out the major messages. You can directly access Weinfreunde content using weinfreunde.neudorf-mkk.de.

That's all about our story for today. We hope you had some fun reading this email.

We understand very well that Neudorf, New Zealand, is an outstanding producer of outstanding wines. We congratulate for many medals in international wine expositions! So your kind of wine-making is as far away from ours as New Zealand is from Germany!

We would like to hear from you and to stay in contact.

Best regards,

Rolf Dautrich
Weinfreunde Neudorf eV



PS: Congrats for the All Blacks for winning back-to-back rugby world championships. The All Blacks showed a remarkable and amazing performance throughout the tournament.

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