Vintners not in a hurry

By JEFF HUDSON

If you aren't familiar with Soquel's Grover Gulch Winery, don't be too hard on yourself. The winery, founded in 1979, hasn't yet bottled it's first year's production. This isn't laziness. It's just Many wine lovers routime before selling it.

this year. They make only Gulch's first release tanks."

What sort of wines can Banek. we expect? "We make the The '81 Cabernet was tion of being a difficult wines as big as possible, made from Napa County wine to make, but with leaving the skins on the grapes, but most of our shading and coolness juice for as long as we Grover Gulch's wines we shouldn't have any big can. It's generally cool have come from the problem." here, and takes ten days Santa Clara Valley vines. or so for fermentation." particularly an old, non- adding another room to Banek says the style is irrigated vineyard near the winery, which will "more Italian than Gilroy. They prefer the allow for an eventual French - not so much dry-farmed vines expansion to around 3,000

color." But he admits kind of wine we like to that "wine made in that make." American oak style takes longer to cooperage is used for mature. That's why a lot barrel aging. of other wineries don't leave the skins in for so started making wine in long. They can move the '69, using plums from a wine quicker."

that Dennis Bassano and tinely hold red wines for Reinhold Banek, partners several years before in wine making, like to drinking them. Grover age their wine for a long Gulch will hold its wines for three or four years, Grover Gulch is a small releasing them "when winery - they made they're ready." The '79 around 1000 gallons of Carignan - which Banek wine in '79, 1300 gallons expects to be Grover reds - Cabernet Sauvig- will probably be bottled in non, Petite Sirah, Zinfan- the next few months, then del and Carignan. left to age until the According to Banek. "the summer of '82. The '79 main reason is that we Cabernet won't go up for aren't crazy about the sale until mid '83. "Some whites, though that's people have to release where the money is, espe- wine early, and I'm sure cially with Chardonnay, they realize that it's not 8 It's also a whole different ready. We're real serious setup, with stainless steel about aging bottles before instead of redwood we sell them. It makes Next year, they may also

oak. We prefer the fruiti- "because they give more gallons of wine annually.

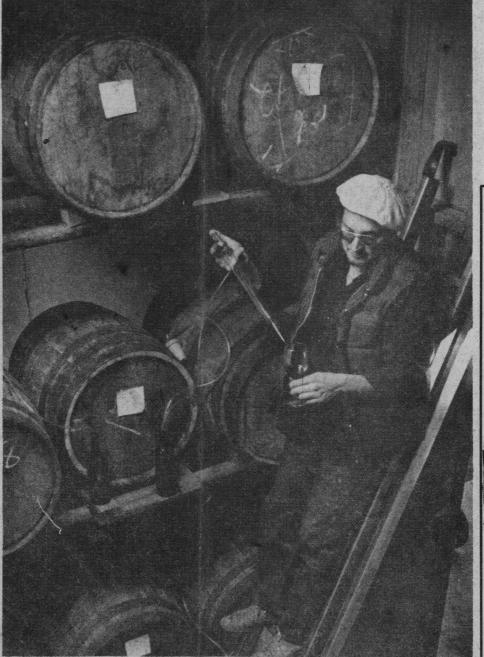
ness... a lot of tannin and color and tannin, for the

Bossano and Banek neighbor's tree. After a few years they switched grapes, and after a "really good" Carignan from Santa Clara Valley grapes, they decided to make it a serious venture.

They built the winery themselves. The hillside building is cool year round, thanks to the extensive shade of nearby redwood trees. Banek, who is also a wood carver, also made the signs and decorated a drab supporting column with a carved grape

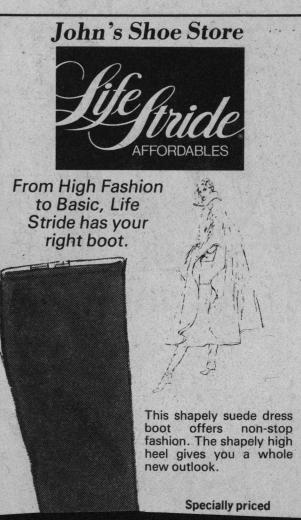
Future plans include an foot by 50 foot underground room, where the bottles will be stored. such a difference." says try their hand at Pinot Noir: "It has the reputa-

They will also be



'We're real serious about aging bottles before we sell them. It makes such a difference.' - Reinhold Benek (at left)

Photo by Kurt Ellison



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