

## Obituaries

The last year has seen the deaths of two low-key, but powerful innovators in the regional wines of North America

**David Lett**, whose famed Eyrie Vineyard demonstrated that fine pinot noir could be grown in Oregon's Willamette Valley, despite doomsayers from California, died on October 9, 2008.

Lett was a determined entrepreneur who did not suffer fools gladly. His fondness for bottle aging his wines led at least one of us to taste a truly remarkable Pinot Meunier (a grape normally used to make Champagne) that Lett supplied to a small group hosted by the University of Oregon.

Lett was a crusty pioneer whose steps have been followed by many other producers and the pinot noir he championed has been a huge success in Oregon.

Unlike Lett, **Mark Miller** was an entirely self-taught wine-maker who died on September 9, 2008. A dapper man who made his way amongst the publishing world's best known personalities, in his day job Miller was an illustrator who was convinced fine wines could be made from South facing slopes along the Hudson River. His Benmarl Vineyard was not even very far from New York City, and at one time Miller managed to syndicate his vines to Manhattan personalities.

Miller often made wines from French American hybrid grapes and he had a fondness for oak aging his wines. He also advocated, with some success, that his wines improved in the bottle.

Despite the beauty of Miller's pioneering Benmarl Vineyard, the Hudson Valley remains a novelty in the wine world.

The Editors

The editors invite the submission of brief scholarly obituaries of those figures who will be of interest to the readers of the *Journal of Wine Economics*.