The Finding Aid of the Louis Cherpin Winery Collection 0080

Rob Strauss
The processing of this collection and the creation of this finding aid was funded by the generous support of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. Special Collections and Archives
September 2018
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Title: Louis Cherpin Winery Collection  
Creator: Louis Cherpin Winery  
Identifier/Call Number: 0080  
Contributing Institution: California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. Special Collections and Archives  
Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 0.21 Linear Feet(1 box)  
Date (inclusive): circa 1934-1980, 2006  
Abstract: The collection contains photographs, wine labels, and ephemera from the Louis Cherpin Winery, which operated from 1934 to 1980 in Fontana, California. There are also photographs of Louis Cherpin and his family members.  
Sponsor: The processing of this collection and the creation of this finding aid was funded by the generous support of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.  
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Preferred Citation: [Box/folder# or item name], Louis Cherpin Winery Collection, Collection no. 0080, Southern California Wine and Wine Industry Collection, Special Collections and Archives, University Library, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.  
Immediate Source of Acquisition: Materials were gathered from Special Collections' Southern California Wine and Wine Industry Collection files.  
Biographical / Historical: The Louis Cherpin Winery was a winery in Fontana, California that operated from 1934 to 1980, although it closed for several years during World War II. The winery was founded by Louis Cherpin, who was originally from France. Cherpin, his father, and other family members had left France for Canada in about 1915 and then moved to California in 1922.  
Before he started the winery, Cherpin worked in the vineyards with the Fontana Farms Company and then was a sharecropper. In the early 1920s, Cherpin bought 30 acres of land in Fontana. He sold 10 acres of land each to his brother, Eugene Cherpin, and his sister, Mary Liabeuf. Both Eugene Cherpin and Mary Liabeuf opened their own wineries near the Louis Cherpin Winery.  
Louis Cherpin was the original winemaker for his winery but he was later joined in the business by his sons: Joe, Eugene, Marcel, and Leon. The winery closed for about four years, beginning in 1943 but the Cherpin brothers started it up again in about 1947. Louis Cherpin died in September of 1956.  
The winery made dry, red table wines, with Burgundy being its biggest seller. Louis Cherpin Winery also sold dessert wines, but those were made by Regina Winery in Etiwanda. The winery would bring grapes to Regina, which would produce the dessert wines and Louis Cherpin Winery would sell the wines under its own label. After Regina was bought out by the beverage producer Heublein, the Cherpin brothers turned to other wineries, including Brookside in Guasti and a winery near Bakersfield, for producing dessert wines. The Louis Cherpin Winery also sold brandy that was bottled in Los Angeles by Trojan Distributing Company.  
The Cherpin family operated sales rooms in Los Angeles and Fontana. They would also sell to customers in homes and restaurants in the Los Angeles area. Additionally, the family would sell its wines in bulk to other wineries, including Charles Krug Winery in Napa Valley.  
The Cherpin brothers faced challenges with the winery after the death of their parents, including financial difficulties with the business and steeper competition from Northern California wineries that sold their products in Los Angeles. The brothers also started leaving for other jobs. In 1973, Joe Cherpin left to work for the Cucamonga Vineyard Company. That same year, Eugene Cherpin - Louis Cherpin's son and the nephew of the Eugene Cherpin who ran his own winery - took over operation of the Louis Cherpin Winery. The winery no longer produced its own wine but continued buying wine in bulk to sell under its own label. Eugene Cherpin operated the winery until 1980 before closing it down and leaving for a job with Heublein.  
Scope and Contents: The Finding Aid of the Louis Cherpin Winery Collection 0080  
Cherpin Winery Collection 0080
The collection contains photographs and wine labels from the Louis Cherpin Winery in Fontana, California; photographs of Louis Cherpin and his family members; and ephemera from the winery, including Louis Cherpin's business card, an envelope and letterhead from the winery and a winery invoice. There is also a folder that contains written descriptions of the photographic prints. The Cherpin family members in the photographs include Louis, Eugene, Leon, Marcel, and Joe.

**Arrangement**
The collection is arranged alphabetically by folder title.

**Related Materials**
Southern California Wine and Wine Industry Oral History Collection, Collection no. 0024, Southern California Wine and Wine Industry Collection, Special Collections and Archives, University Library, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

**Processing Information**
The collection was processed by Rob Strauss in September 2018.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**
Louis Cherpin Winery
Wine and wine making - California
Photographs
Wine labels

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**box 1**
- **Business Card - Cherpin, Louis** circa 1934-1970
- **Envelope - Louis Cherpin Winery** circa 1934-1980
- **Invoice and Statement - Louis Cherpin Winery** circa 1934-1980
- **Letterhead - Louis Cherpin Winery** circa 1960-1980
- **Photographic Negatives - Cherpin Family** 2006 October
- **Photographs - Agricultural Workers** circa 1942-1964
  - Physical Description: (Photographic prints)

**box 1**
- **Photographs - Cherpin Family** circa 1934-1980, 2006
  - Physical Description: (Photographic prints and 1 compact disc)

**box 1**
- **Photographs - Louis Cherpin Winery** circa 1934-1980
  - Physical Description: (Photographic prints and 3 compact discs)

**box 1**
- **Photographs and Descriptions - Louis Cherpin Winery and Cherpin Family (Photocopies)** circa 1947-1960

**box 1**
- **Wine Labels - Louis Cherpin Winery** circa 1934-1980