

Winery at La Grange October 2006 Newsletter

A Taste of La Grange History **by Ray Olszewski**

La Grange Piano Plays Again After 150 years One evening in early 2006 a neighboring family walked over to see the changes being made to the 18th Century manor house. The front door was locked so Mom and Dad walked around the back while their two children played on the front porch. As the parents unsuccessfully tried to open the back door, they heard piano music, thinking that their children must have opened the front door and found a piano. Dad discovered an unlocked side door through which he and his wife entered the manor house and called out to their children. The music abruptly stopped !

The parents found that the front door was double bolted and their children were still outside playing. The four then searched the two and a half story house including the basement for a piano . . . to no avail. Who then, was playing the piano and where was it ? *Note: In his will dated January 21st, 1869 Benoni E. Harrison (B: Jan 7, 1786 D: Aug 17, 1869) willed to his nephew B.H. Jordan (B: Oct 8, 1820 D: Jan 7, 1891) a number of items one of which included "the Piano"... which was in "the parlor."*

The Light in the Window A daughter who was living at La Grange with her parents during the Civil War, found a badly wounded Union officer hiding in the nearby Bull Run Mountains and was smitten on first sight. With the help of her 'mammy', she moved the officer to a cave where she nursed him back to health by carrying food to him in a basket making it appear like she was gathering eggs. At night time, she would signal him with a lit candle in her bedroom window. When he regained his health, the officer returned to his regiment but unfortunately, they never met again. One night, during the major construction at La Grange, Chris Pearmund was standing where the winery building is now located. He said he saw soft candle light shining from one of the bedroom windows, entered the manor house to extinguish it and found . . . only darkness.