



Uncorking a Collection

RUTGERS RECEIVES BOOKS OF RARE VINTAGE

Early in Ted Task's career as a wine and spirits salesman, he wandered into a used bookstore and stumbled across Alexander Henderson's *The History of Ancient and Modern Wines*. When he later learned that it had been published in 1824 and was the first book on wine making ever printed in English, he had it rebound. "That started me on the road to collecting," says Task, 74. "Reading about wine helped keep me one step ahead of my customers."

But when Task left sales in 2001 and downsized from a house to a condo, he realized the collection needed a new steward. An appraiser told him that some of his books and wine collectibles had considerable value, but it was unlikely that he would find a buyer for the entire collection. Says Task, "I had put so much love into it over so many years that I didn't want someone to come in and cherry-pick it."

His daughter, Evie Task LC'87, former senior alumni relations officer for the Rutgers School of Law-Newark, offered a solution: Rutgers. The idea resonated with Task, who had sent both Evie and his son Aaron RC'90 to the university. In addition, Task, who teaches wine courses at a culinary arts school in the Washington, DC, area, had visited Rutgers several times to run wine-tasting events.

The collection came to the university in 2005, each book labeled with Task's own colorfully designed bookplates dedicated in honor of Evie and Aaron. The 300-plus books and artifacts, which include items of both historical and educational interest, have been distributed among Special Collections and University Archives, the library at the Center of Alcohol Studies, and other Rutgers' libraries.