

MA(i)SONRY

N A P A V A L L E Y

Ma(i)sonry Napa Valley represents “a life aesthetic.” As an art, design and wine gallery set amidst a contemporary, landscaped sculpture garden, Ma(i)sonry offers guests a respite and a retreat. While its past may not appear to play a prominent role in its new incarnations, the history of the former Charles Rovegno House still permeates the walls and rooms of this rustic stone structure.

In 1892, Charles Rovegno was one of many Italian immigrants drawn to Napa Valley’s fertile farmlands. At the turn of the century, the valley was on the precipice of becoming a notable agricultural region for which it is known for today.

When Rovegno began his life as a vinedyardist in the early 1900s, very few wines were being produced in the valley. Rovegno settled in what was then known as Yountville’s “Chinahouse,” an area so tiny, it fell just short of the designation “Chinatown.” In fact, Yountville was not the charming restaurant and wine destination it is today, rather it was a rough and tumble trapping and farming community filled with those from the fallout of California’s gold mining days.

In 1902—with the help of Angelo Brovelli, a local mason responsible for many of Napa County’s idyllic stone bridges, Rovegno began building what would be his last home. Using stone quarried from the eastern hills of Napa Valley, Rovegno and Brovelli constructed a utilitarian, craftsman-style building that possessed more functional charm than overwrought beauty.

The gable roof, simple cut stone lintels and the use of rough cut field stone all suggested that Rovegno intended to use the manor as a hotel rather than his residence. In his lifetime, this would not be the case, but perhaps Rovegno possessed prophetic powers of foreshadowing. Almost 20 years after he passed away in 1954, the historic stone property was converted to a boutique, seven-room inn known as Burgundy House Inn, which remained in operation until 2007.

Today, the Charles Rovegno House is a blend of past, present and future. In addition to its National Register of Historic Places status, Ma(i)sonry is listed on the Napa County Historic Resources Inventory. While its façade has been “lifted,” the integrity of this historic structure remains intact. Ma(i)sonry Napa Valley’s intimate, organic design serves as the perfect backdrop for “a life aesthetic.”