



Atlanta's wine world is mourning the loss of one of its most jovial and most dedicated workers, Henri Ferrier. Born in New Orleans, Henri was a dedicated and devoted advocate of wine, a proud husband and father, and a fellow with a totally wry sense humor. In his last assignment, he was a representative for importer and wine marketer Dreyfus Ashby, for whom he had worked for two years.

Just 46 years old, Henri died suddenly at home early in the morning of March 31, 2009.

Henri was the kind of fellow you always were glad to see. He'd have something amusing to say; a brightness would light him up when he saw a friend, and he was not shy about expression his opinions. His wry sense of humor often was turned on himself, as it did when he returned to work after falling off the roof of his house, broke his back and had to explain to colleagues why he had been missing in action.

A graduate in marketing from Louisiana State University, Henri began his life as a sales rep with Bologna of Louisiana, where he worked for decade during which he took the Gallo sales training course. Then he was on his way in the wine sales world. He began working for Paterno in 1996, then for Hess Collection until joining Dreyfus, Ashby & Co. in mid-2007.

It was in that capacity that I last broke bread with Henri at a lunch he hosted for Veronique Drouhin at the Vinings Inn last year. He was as usual gracious, funny, real, and put up with my attempts to explain in French to Veronique the intricacies of pairing wine with Southern barbecue. I last saw him in Birmingham in February during a trade and consumer show featuring Oregon Pinot Noir, and he was his usual bright smile self.

Small in stature but huge in presence, Henri filled a room. You knew immediately he was there. His wife Nancy, who was with him when he died, remembers when they met at a fraternity party. A mutual friend had introduced them, saying since they were neither one very tall, they would get along. Her response was, "Oh, no. I never date anybody who's not at least 6'4" tall." Henri's retorted, "Well, I never date anybody more than four times." They proceeded to talk for three hours, she said.

Nancy went home that night and told sorority sisters she'd met the man she was going to marry, and when they dated for the fifth time, she told Henri. "Well, you've already broken your rule." They were married five years to the day after they had met, and were married for 20 "wonderful, wonderful years," she said.

Besides his many friends and colleagues, and his wife Nancy, Henri also leaves daughter Elizabeth, 19, who studies ballet at the Milwaukee Ballet School, and Stephen, 14, a high school student.

In lieu of flowers, Dreyfus, Ashby & Co. is establishing a scholarship fund for the children to which contributions may be made. Services are scheduled for Monday, April 6, 2009, beginning a 10 a.m. with the family receiving friends at Northside Funeral Home at 12050 Crabapple Rd. (770-645-1414) and services at 2 p.m. at St. Andrews Catholic Church at 678 Riverside Dr. in Roswell (770-641-8584). Henri will be buried in Mississippi near Nancy's family's home.

MORE INFORMATION, AVAILABILITY, AND PRICES at AtlantaWineSchool.com

Or call 770-668-0435

Rent our Wine Room for your Private Events!