

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AMATEUR WINEMAKERS

*News and  
Views  
Occasional*

JANUARY 1968

*"A pamphlet shall be produced and circulated to all Members not less than three times a year. Such pamphlet to include extracts of general interest from proceedings of the A.G.M. and committee meetings, report of the Conference, suggestions for future programmes etc., also invited views of Members on any particular aspect of the Association or Conference."*

Extract of Resolution carried at A.G.M., October, 1967.

*"Cooks and Winemakers have done far more than philosophers to promote human happiness."*

Walter  
James.

Dear Member(s),

And so, this is the first of the pamphlets.

Having undertaken to write it for you this year (not less than three times unless thrown out of the job previously) I have been most careful to print my terms of reference above, so that I do not stray too far along the path of editorial licence – at least, not in the first one! In particular, I have noted most carefully that Association, Conference, and, above all, Member, have capital letters, and quite rightly so, and I must endeavour to retain them.

This is to be a Newsletter Occasional. That is, there is as yet no guarantee of when you will receive the next one. But when the second one does appear, I have every hope that it will contain views as well as news. *Your* views. As always with letters of this type, it is the wide diversity of the Members' views that puts life into the publication, and I do make a plea here and now for your views on the Association, whether they be concerned with the past, present, or future, as you visualise the future. Otherwise, if the thoughts and views of Members are not forthcoming, you may find the second issue contains just three pages of my own views. Heaven preserve us from that!

In the past, the A.G.M. has been the only occasion and place where you could legitimately air your grievances, to complain about what little is being done, or contrariwise, to demand what a lot should be done. This may have meant a longish journey to London for a two minute speech on your pet hate. Now you have this *new* opportunity. Send it to me, by registered post if it is a very strong hate, and I will see that your thoughts are aired in issue No.2.

As an Association we cater for the needs of Circles Competitive; for Circles Social; for attached Members of all shapes and sizes( and abilities!); and, in addition, we cater for that singular anomaly, the "unattached" Member. Oh, to find the thoughts and longings, the hopes and despairs, the disappointments and" the earnest desires of the unattached Member. Is our present set-up

what he/she really wants? How could we, the Association best serve him/her?

Oh please, dear unattached Member please drop me a line – the address is at the end of the letter - and let your voice be heard amidst the overwhelming proportion of attached Members, showing them that you too are an equal Member of this Association.

NEWS

Your new Committee met early in December to start on the year's work, myself among them for the first time, and I can honestly say that I have never before sat on a Committee that has tackled the work in hand with such energy. This is no committee that sits and chews over the why's and wherefore's of procedure. I found waiting on my agenda a list of offices to be filled ---; the list being slightly longer than the number of persons on the committee! Within minutes – yes, MINUTES (no pun intended) these posts were being filled, and some very hefty responsibilities were landed squarely in the laps of all members. Nor was the filling of these posts a mere formality. Important changes were made, some of which I now list.

Our new Chairman for the year is S. W. "Andy" Andrews, in place of Cyril Berry who becomes Vice-Chairman. After some years in the hot seat, Cyril

**ON A THUMBNAIL** deserves a rest, although I'm not sure that rest is what he is going to get. Our persevering Secretary, Wg. Cdr. Woodley remains the same, but we have found a new Treasurer. From now, and in the foreseeable future, our financial affairs will be framed (and the figures fiddled) by the facile fingers of Fred Forster of Faversham. What a lot of F's! Membership Secretary is Ken Hill, of whom more later, while Mr. Bill Millett of Wickford has been saddled with the vital job of Show Organiser, a task which he is already tackling with his considerable vigour. You might say he's putting his weight behind it. As for the remainder, well rest assured that they are all undertaking some particular job of work, and if you inspect closely your Show Schedule when it arrives shortly, you will see the full list. (What a swindle this chap Delmon really is. He sets out to write all the Association news, and then tells you to wait for your schedule to read half of it from there).

Plans for Torquay go on apace. As we say every year, it promises to be the best ever. Quite apart from the Show itself, the lectures, and the social contacts (what a lovely expression) Devon in the springtime should be really wonderful. Not that anybody really grumbled about Harrogate in a blizzard, but. . .!

Stewards will be required at Torquay. Personally I can never understand why stewards are so backward in coming forward. The judges' stewards have an admirable opportunity to see the judges at work and to learn a tremendous amount from them, while the general stewards have a short, sharp job of work to do, with no serious loss of Conference time and the great satisfaction of knowing that it has been an essential job well done. After that plug, I advise you to apply quickly before all the jobs are filled - judges' stewards to S. W. Andrews, Leith Villa, 6 Tamworth Road, Hertford; and general stewards to Mr. Leslie Stagg, 86 Arden Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham.

Returning again to general committee news - there was such a lot done that there is a lot of news to tell. One matter is worth recording clearly. For some years, Members have been joining the Association at the Conference doors, thus gaining their reduced admission price at the same time as rejoining. While there is no doubt that a few bona fide Members find this to advantage, there is also no doubt that many non-members take out a guinea subscription at the door in order to enter a 25/- Conference. So it has been decided that Members up to, and including, the last date for entries, i.e. 22nd March, have their free admission, while those who join at the door will have to pay the extra 4/- to get in. This would appear to be quite fair so long as you do all realise the situation. Your subscription for this current year must therefore be paid by March 22nd to entitle you to your free admission to the Conference. Note the new Membership Secretary is Mr. K. Hill, 81 Laxton Road, Hunts Cross, Liverpool, 25.

## **WANTED - A TITLE**

Come along please, you clever Members. I need a snappy, appropriate title for future issues of this Newsletter. The title I've given it this time won't do for ever, and though I've toyed with "Glass and Gossip," "The Wine Press," and "Naaw Jaw" (work that out), I obviously haven't yet found the ideal title. No prize is offered, apart from the honour, and you are most welcome to that.

## ON A THUMBNAIL

A further Resolution carried at the A.G.M. was that future applicants for nomination to the Committee should have a thumbnail biography circulated to Members. Thus we should all know, to some extent, for whom we were voting. This triennial letter could well be the medium for publishing these thumbnail sketches (so long as there aren't more than fifty nominations in anyone year). I see no reason why nominees shouldn't write their own life story. After all, they know it better than anyone else. But please remember, I only reckon to get 90 words to the thumbnail. Just to show you the sort of thing I mean, here is one of our present Committee covered, very inadequately, in ninety words (not counting my own facetious comments in brackets):

Sybil Hill - wife of Ken Hill (but keeps happy in spite of it). Makes about 40 gallons of wine a year with no little success at Shows, National and Northern Counties particularly, and considerable success for drinking with her Haute Cuisine cooking. (Lucky Ken, no wonder he looks so fit). President of Widnes Wine Society, Vice-President of Merseyside, and for many years Secretary. National Judge by Examination in 1966. Teaches wine and beer-making at various Lancashire Evening Classes. Attended all Nationals and Summer Schools since 1962. Likes dry fruit wines, claret, good food, and Members who pay their subscriptions in good time. Dislikes-this photograph. (So I haven't put it in).

## JUST A VIEW

A personal one certainly, but one for all members to chew upon, and, I'd like to think, act upon during the year. I have long thought that the publicity we frequently receive is biased still towards the image of the eccentric winemaker, with odd wines and exploding bottles. I know the Press generally prefers this humorous approach - a funny story sells better - but, is it not time we tried to insist that we are serious winemakers, making a quality product from sensible materials? We are, aren't we? Could we not persuade any reporter or other questioner that the "odd" wines really are out now? I am sure we could improve our image nationally, and we *should* so improve it, by, making this insistence. This is not a matter for the Committee, but for *individuals*, and I'm not assuming that it is easy -- the questioners will still ask about the oddities. Just push the merits of the good stuff, and we should hear far less of that old old saying, "Oh, you can make wine from anything." Oh, how I do get fed up with people telling me this.

That brings me to the end of your first Newsletter. Now it's up to you to reach for pen and paper (a) to write to me; (b) to pay your subscription if you haven't already; (c) to book in at Torquay. I shall be seeing you all at Torquay, of course.

PHILIP DELMON.

53 St. Matthews Parade, Northampton.