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NEWS & VIEWS OCCASIONAL

OCTOBER, 1976

Dear Members,

Plans are well in hand for the Scarborough Conference on 15/16/17th April, 1977. The Show schedule will accompany this news letter. Please read the schedule carefully and ensure that you write to the correct persons for the various information that you may require. Each year a lot of time and money is wasted by people directing their letters to the wrong Committee member.

On behalf of the Executive, may I thank those members who have had the courtesy to enclose a stamped addressed envelope when requiring replies to their letters. I think that now is the time to give you all a gentle reminder about subscriptions. Have you paid yours yet? If not, please do so and avoid disappointment later.

I have just had the pleasure of attending the Midland Federation's Annual Show, which maintained the high standards for which it has become so well known. I must say that I feel the Dinner which accompanies the festivities gives a sense of occasion to the evening, especially when, as always, the quality of the meal is of such a high standard.

My appeal for letters from members has been kindly answered, and they are all published in this news letter, also the name of the writer of the winning letter who will soon be receiving the £2. The next news letter is due for publishing at the end of February, 1977, and the offer of £2 for the best letter received between the present time and that date will be awarded £2. Keep up the good work. Just one point, some of the letters received to-date are a little lengthy and as I hope to publish as many as possible I would appreciate it if this will be borne in mind.

On page 12 of the Scarborough schedule is a space for you to let me know the type of information you would like the news letter to contain. Do please give the matter some thought, complete the form and either post it to me or hand it to me at Scarborough. This will give me and future editors an opportunity to produce a news letter that will satisfy the majority of members.

Ken Hill, Editor. 18 Laxton Road, Liverpool, 25.

NEWS

Here is a reminder of the salient points re the Scarborough National:

1. No tickets will be on sale at the door: all applications in advance to Alan Briggs.
2. No tickets will be issued after 9th April, 1977.
3. Entry to Civic Reception will be by Civic Reception Ticket only
4. There are only 900 tickets available and for a NAWB member to be sure of a Civic Reception ticket they must apply before 31.1.1977
5. All Judges will be given a free ticket for the weekend; this includes Civic Reception Ticket
6. Membership to NAWB must be completed by 10th January, 1977, to be eligible for members classes.
7. Closing date for all entries is 14th February, 1977.
8. Date of Conference: 15th/16th/17th APRIL, 1977, at SPAR COMPLEX, Scarborough.

Here is the news from the Executive Committee Meeting held on Sunday, 10th October, 1976. I am pleased to report that all Prize Cards for 1976 Show have now been sent out. The Conference Hotel for Scarborough, is Brooklands Hotel, Esplanade Gardens, Scarborough. Alan Smith, Show Manager,

has viewed the following Hotels which are close to the Conference Hall:-

Renelyn Hotel, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast,	100 rooms	£13.50 + VAT
Carlton Hotel, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast,	50 rooms	£16.40 + VAT
Esplanade Hotel " " "	80 rooms	£18.00 including VAT
Southlands Hotel, " " "	80 rooms	£20.00 including VAT
Palm Court Hotel " " "	100 rooms	£20.00 + VAT
Prince of Wales Hotel " " "	100 rooms	£24.03 including VAT

The Chief Steward, Mrs. F. Dobson, 1121 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, would greatly appreciate the names and addresses of anyone who would like to volunteer as a General Steward. The duties will be up to 4 hours, as requested by the Chief Steward. Those performing this duty will be made Temporary Members.

Plans are afoot to obtain a suitable emblem to be worn by all Past Presidents and it is expected to have these in time for Scarborough.

New ties are now available with the emblem and NAWB in the following colours: Dark Blue, Maroon, Green and Brown, price £1.50 + 10p postage available from Mr. George Christmas, Hamstead Croft, Drift Lane, Bosham, P.018 8PP.

After a full discussion it was decided that the venue for the 1978 Conference and Show will be Nottingham University. It was appreciated that there was a body of opinion that favoured Brighton but, in view of the high cost of travel these days, the vote went to Nottingham. It is central and many who attended Nottingham last time were very favourably impressed with the ease of reaching the University by the many Motorways.

John Toule, PRO for the Association of Wine and Beermaking Federations, has written to say that the ITV Wine Contest project has been indefinitely postponed. None the less, the Association are going to discuss possible future moves at their next meeting.

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VIEWS

A few weeks ago a winemaking friend and I were discussing all subjects vinous over a glass of wine. Inevitably the subject of Judging came up. After a brief discussion we suddenly realised we both had a different approach to Judging when it came to the final placements. Since then I have spoken to several wine Judges and there appears to be two distinct schools of thought. Here is the problem:

Approach "A"

Having evaluated the wines or beers the Judge awards 1st, 2nd or 3rd according to their scoring, irrespective of their quality: The premise being that the Judge's duty is to evaluate the class and place 1st, 2nd or 3rd, and that it does not matter the quality of the winning exhibits as long as they are the best three in the class. Obviously the Judge would be expected either in writing or by word of mouth to make comments upon the quality of the exhibits.

Approach "B"

Here I must declare an interest as this is the approach I favour. Having evaluated the wines or beers in the same way as Approach "A", the Judge comes to the final placement. In this approach the placing of 1st, 2nd or 3rd is not automatic according to the points scored. Here a further consideration comes into the reckoning and that is the quality of the leading exhibits, taking into consideration the standard of the Show. In Approach "B" the Judge has a level of acceptance below which a prize will not be awarded even though it has scored more points than other exhibits in the class.

The defence of this approach is that if an exhibitor obtains an award for a very poor wine just because it scored more points than its rivals, it will give the exhibitor a false impression of the standard required.

ndly, if the exhibitor gives a sample of such a wine to friends saying 'Judge X gave me a First Prize for this' the tasters will have a poor opinion of Judge X's ability.

Summing up: Approach "A" is obviously the easiest for the Judge. Approach "B" puts more responsibility upon the Judge but I feel that it is one they must accept. My own experience is that the with-holding of awards in Approach "B" rarely happens in Wine classes but I have known it happen in beer classes.

There are good arguments for both approaches. I would be interested to hear the views of both Judges and Exhibitors on this problem.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.....

(The views expressed by the letter-writers are not necessarily the views of the Executive)

I thank all those who responded to my plea for letters from the members. Apart from those whose letters are reproduced, I should like to thank Cyril Edmunds, Hon. Sec. & News Letter Editor for the Heathfield Winemakers. Cyril made several copies of his news letter available to me. I shall be publishing items from them as space permits.

Thanks, also, to Shiela Fisher, 13 Kings Drive, Littleover, Derby, who (following my recipe for Damson Liqueur) has sent a number of other fruit liqueur recipes. (See under "Occasional")

The following are the letters received. The winning letter for this issue and recipient of the £2 is Mr. Elvin Plant. Congratulations!

Mr. Editor - "Thoughts on Supplies"

"Containers". Round shapes will, size for size, contain more than other shapes but our shelves are square. What we gain inside the jar we lose in shelf space.

Now in a recent issue of A.W. the Editor made a plea for glass, square containers of one gallon upwards (why not metric?) as provided on the American market. Alas, Great Britain is not America. (what I really mean is I'm glad it isn't, I prefer G.B. as it is despite the state of the £1) and few winemakers here can utilise 5 and 10 gallon glass containers. The market is very small and glass has its drawbacks. If the market can produce a TOUGHENED or protected glass container this will be a welcome step forward but such a container must be portable, i.e. have a proper handle on two sides at least. I am interested in ONE/TWO gallon only!

I cannot see a big future for glass in anything over one/two gallon (or the metric equivalent) in the British amateur market and in my view the Editor would do a great service to his readers if he pressed for a reliable, square, PLASTIC container. When Messrs. Leigh Williams were operating in the retail field I purchased square plastic containers, with handles, and with a tight inner plug under a screw cap. The thread is as good today as when I purchased the container some ten years ago and the inner plug still fits tightly!

"Filters" My filter is now an 'old' model but the pads are still available in a slightly different size. Does a difference in diameter of less than $\frac{1}{4}$ " justify the inconvenience to long-standing (and long-suffering!) customers. Now while on the subject of FILTERS, here's my problem for your solution: I start the syphon, plug in the filter and all goes well for about ten minutes then the air bubbles on the syphon tube collect in the bend of the tube near the gallon jar lip. This creates a LARGE bubble and the syphoning process becomes a trickle. Why?

You all know the firm which merits this criticism as it's a B nuisance, and it should be booted out of the market.

(Letter from Elven Plant)

Dear Mr. Hill,

I am sticking my neck out and answering your appeal for news and views, and supplying you with a few of my views. Being a straightforward blunt Yorkshire man I have some very strong views on various aspects of wine-making. I want to make it quite clear at the beginning that I am not quarrelling or casting any reflections on any person. I like an argument, providing it is friendly and constructive.

When I first began in this most fascinating and rewarding hobby, equipment materials and books were not as plentiful as at the present time. As my hearing was seriously affected I was not able to hear very much of speakers and had to rely on reports from members of my family and mostly on books. I very soon found out that different books varied in both procedure and in recipes; I sometimes wondered whether some of the writers had made some of the recipes they published.

After quite a few messes and mopping up operations I decided to go my own way and devised my own general procedure, also my own recipes which have had a quota of success for me. Also, I am asked for my secret but there is no secret and I practice what I preach, and other people are at liberty to follow my methods.

I could write a book, but I am limiting to general views. Let me give an example or two of book teachings: Some give amounts of fruits, etc., sugar and finish up with a gallon of water. I doubt if a good gallon of wine can be made with a gallon of water. They advise adding sugar when the hydrometer reading drops to 5 and advise topping with water when racked off. I am well aware that most demi johns hold varying amounts over a gallon, but not to the extent of 9 and 10 pints, which has been my experience. Also, acid contents of wines has been the subject of arguments in the monthly winemaker. I do not propose to make any comment on this in this letter - but I could.

I often heard from ex army and navy men with whom I had worked, who had been in the Far East, how potent rice wine - or saki as they called it - was. Being a new beginner I was going to make a gallon of this very potent saki wine and I naturally followed a book recipe with 3 lb of rice - and in a couple of days was faced with three parts of a bucket full of rice, enough to feed the crew of a ship. I had to squeeze this through a nylon bag, bit by bit. How was I to know it should have been paddy rice? I was new to the game and never even heard of the stuff until a friendly wine maker told me - and I have only seen any once in 9 years. Also I have only seen one recipe in that time that gives paddy rice. Another one I fell for was Raisin Wine: The recipe stated 8-lb of raisins. I decided to have a go with 6-lb and would have been lucky to get 3 bottles out of it if I had not done something about it; anyone who does not believe me should try it.

I have been presented with a book recently which gives a few recipes with enough fruit for dessert wines and goes on to give 4-lb of sugar per gallon, then gives the colour of the wine and classification as table wines. My views on this are not very printable, and in my view any beginner getting hold of it (as its cost is £2.50p) their interest could be killed outright.

Here are some figures which I have taken from several books: Amounts of sugar in the gallon to give a Hydrometer reading of 120 -

Book "A" - 3-lb.4-ozs	Book "B" - 3-lb.3-oz	Book "C" 3-lb.2-oz
Book "D" - 2-lb.12-oz	Book "E" - 3-lb.2-oz	Book "F" 2-lb.13-oz

For me to pass any comments on these would mean writing a separate article.

During my off duties from my wines I come across quite a lot of people interested in our craft, and I am very often stopped by people seeking advice. I am always canvassing for new circle members but am not very often successful. They haven't the time for working, or they cannot afford it. One big stumbling-block to increasing membership is storage space. In years gone by practically every house had a large cellar with plenty of room and anyone knows that in modern housing today room is limited and people are satisfied with an occasional gallon. We hear and read from time to time of fellow brewers having 5, 10 and even 20 batches on their finances, and storage must be fabulous.

Wines are being made and sold under country wines no different from our own; there is nothing to stop I or any one else purchasing some of these and taking some along to a circle meeting or even entering it in a Show - which brings me to a question I often ask myself: How far has professionalism entered our organisation? Are we now a professional organisation? A lot of our members will say no, but I ask them to study the number of members who have entered into the winemaking equipment business either full time or part-time - writing books and articles for remuneration, charging fees for speaking and judging at other circles, lecturing at Technical Schools and, finally, accepting prize money at Shows and, having accepted prize money myself, I am in the above category. Being one who voted at one A.G.M. for prize money to be discontinued I am not too happy about the situation.

I could go on for quite some time on circles, competitions, judging and judges but I think this will have to suffice, and I hope it meets with your requirements, and in concluding, may I suggest that instead of the Executive awarding £2 they award a year's subscription to the National Federation.

(Letter from Frank Scholes, Member of Wakefield & District Wine Circle)

Dear Mr. Hill,

There is little doubt that the people who serve on the Executive of any organisation are subjected to more kicks than praise, which makes this criticism of the executive of the NAWB anything but whole-hearted. Unlike the rest of the members such as myself, who just sit back and await results, they did volunteer to work on our behalf.

I hope to redress the balance at the next AGM when I hope to introduce my proposal, first introduced at the Birmingham AGM, that a small token of appreciation should be presented to all past members of the NAWB executive. Following the financial success of the Nottingham AGM there should be every reason that this proposal be adopted.

It has been said many times that there is no code- no system- that cannot be improved, and these few humble thoughts are offered only because they are my conception of how the National may be improved. This does not mean that the majority of members would agree with my ideas.

Firstly, I note that the combined profit from the 1976 National raffle and draw was £579. I fully appreciate the hard work that went into selling the tickets and the basic good intentions of the Fund raisers. As an ex-advertising man I am not in favour of any form of pressurised sales. And to some degree raffles and draw tickets are pressurised sales. One feels obliged to buy a ticket from a colleague or friend.

One tends to become weary of requests to support organisations which benefit only its members by giving them extra pleasure. I do not need to be supported by disinterested parties - I am fully prepared to pay for my own pleasure. It is very rare that a draw or raffle makes a loss - so the loser is the buyer of the ticket.

There is an easy way to make this form of pressurised sale totally unnecessary and that is by increasing the annual subscription by the sum of £1.00 - little more than the cost of a gallon of petrol. It would create no extra work for the Membership Secretary - in fact at the 1976 AGM he proposed raising the subscription to £1.00. Better luck in 1977.

The News and Views Occasional advertisement about the 1977 Conference omitted to give the name of the town. It is Scarborough on the east coast of Yorkshire. With one exception, I have been to every National since Brighton in 1963 and this would mean that I had attended several Nationals in the North. Although I have no reference to any figures, it would seem that the majority of people who attend the Nationals live in the South of England (*see Alan Briggs' Table: Editor). Working on the assumption that the Nationals should be held in different regions of England and Wales, it would be unforgivable if the National was held in the North for two successive years. I would imagine that some of the Older members will approach the National at Scarborough with mixed feelings. Some of us will remember Harrogate in 1966 (Snow but great hospitality) and also Caister (Hailstones and inadequate heating) and will hope that the Yorkshire weather will be reasonable.

Must the venue be on the coast? There are plenty of places inland and more central who would also welcome our business. According to the Advisory Centre for Education, most universities are available for conferences during the vacations. Among those worthy of further investigation would be the Universities at East Anglia (Norwich), Keele (Staffs), Canterbury (Kent), Brighton (Sussex), Warwick, Aberystwyth (Wales), Exeter, Loughborough (Leicester), Lancaster and several others. One of my favourite Nationals was Torquay, in the South-West of England, where the palm trees waved in the gentle breeze and the temperature was almost sub-tropical.

Without adequate numbers of competitors of a high standard the National Show would be a failure and every incentive should be made to ensure that the numbers and the standard of entry is maintained. Part of the "Perks" of winning at the National is to receive a trophy in front of the assembled members or at least to be named on the award winners list.

The News and Views Occasional that was sent to members after the Margate National included a separate sheet listing all of the award winners so that any members who were unable to attend the National or who do not purchase a magazine were kept fully informed. Is it too much to ask that a complete list of award winners be sent out after every National?

Regarding the availability of trophies for only some of the classes, I consider it is now time that all exhibitors gaining first award should be presented with a trophy for retention for one year. It is difficult to win a First in a National and a small piece of printed card does not have quite the same prestige as a silver plated trophy.

There should be a further stimulation in maintaining interest of the competing clubs. Sometimes it is the combined efforts of several members that enables a club to gain enough points to become Champion Club. As at the 1976 National, the margin of points between the top Clubs may be only a few points. Considering that more than a hundred Clubs belong to the Association, it should be possible to list the first ten. *(See last News Letter: Editor).

The announcement from the Association of Wine and Beermaking Federations stating that they were organising a "NATIONAL" competition was most puzzling. Does this statement mean that the National Association are abdicating their responsibilities in organising the NATIONAL shows? It cannot be termed as a NATIONAL Show when some of the best wine and beermakers in the country live in areas which do not belong to the Association of Federations.

Some of these wine and beermakers have requested that their Club join the local Federation but without avail and other Clubs have joined a local federation but the Federation itself is not a member of the Association. There is very little that the individual can do about it. At Club, Federation and National level, the individual has an uphill task in trying to change attitudes. Although the competition is not scheduled until October, 1977, it may need all of that time for an individual to become eligible for entry into the Show. This is why I feel that it should be open for all individuals of the National Association.

Another difficulty I foresee is that the Federation areas do not coincide with the reception areas of the T.V. Companies. In certain areas they would overlap and if the National Association has abdicated its responsibilities in this Competition, then the regions should be free to choose their own Judges.

Finally, I would like to convey a personal 'thank you' to all of the members of the Executive - both past and present - who have helped to keep the Association in being over the years. Looking forward to meeting old and new members in April, 1977.

(Letter from Stan Baker, 131 Garden Road, Chatham, Kent)

(The Advisory Centre for Education is at 32 Trumpington St. Cambridge)

OCCASIONAL

National Entrants and Entries - revealing figures

Our Entries Secretary, Alan Briggs, has been doing some research into our records regarding National venues and the corresponding Exhibitors and Exhibit numbers. The following is the Table with Alan's comments:-

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>VENUE</u>	<u>ENTRANTS</u>	<u>ENTRIES</u>
1964	Bournemouth	340	1665
1965	Clacton	409	1941
1966	Harrogate	377	2094
1967	Bognor	521	3323
1968	Torquay	467	3268
1969	Southport	508	3511
1970	Caister	555	4093
1971	Hull	437	2554
1972	Eastbourne	695	4280
1973	Harrogate	527	2891
1974	Margate	480	3266
1975	Bognor	Show Cancelled	
1976	Nottingham	390	3250

It is interesting to note the rise and fall of entries for the various venues, but if one calculates the average number of bottles per person, then the highest figure is Nottingham with an average of 8.33 bottles per person and the lowest is Clacton in 1965 with 4.74 bottles.

However, the most interesting fact from old entries books is the entry fee - which in 1964 was 2/6d or 12½p per entry and for 1977 the entry fee for members is 15p or 3/- in real money.

Can members really say that the National Executive has been unkind to them over the years as regards entries? One would think NOT!

FRUIT LIQUEUR RECIPES SUPPLIED BY SHIELA FISHER OF DERBY

<u>June</u>		<u>July</u>	<u>Cassis</u>
	1-lb Raspberries		
	¾-lb Sugar (use caster)		
	Cover with Spirit		¾ fill jar with crushed Black-currants
			6-ozs caster Sugar per pint in capacity
			Top up with Gin or Vodka
			Likewise Red Currants and Blackberries

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<u>Oct/Nov</u>	<u>Sloe Gin</u>	<u>Apricot Brandy (Hammam!)</u>
	1-lb Sloes	20 Apricots
	3-4 ozs Sugar	¼-lb Caster Sugar

Jars of course must be sterilised. Kilner Jars very good. Sweet Jars or Fruit Juice Jars - not thin glass (can be very nasty should they crack.

Strawberries make a good one:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ jar of ripe Fruit
- 3-4 ozs Caster Sugar
- Top up again with Spirit.

I personally think that Strawberries are only to be enjoyed holding the snuff in the left hand and slowly and surely relished.

- Cherry Brandy 1-lb Cherries
- $\frac{1}{2}$ -lb Caster Sugar
- 12 Almonds
- Top up with Brandy

- Advocat 4 fresh Eggs - wash shells well
- Place in basin (glass or pot)
- Extract juice from 4 lemons

Pour juice over Eggs. Leave for 4 days, turn them over now and again. Lemon juice will become chalky and eggs pliable. On the 4th day have ready $\frac{1}{2}$ -lb Caster Sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ -pint Double Cream; $\frac{1}{2}$ -bottle Jamaica Run.

Beat the Eggs up and strain (I use nylon net). Whisk cream until quite thick and slowly add egg, sugar and lemon mixture, then slowly add the Run. You can use colouring if it is too pale but why bother? Bottle, label if you must and store in a cool place. I don't think you'd keep it long and I'll dare you to deny that you don't put your fingers round the glass to make sure that you've not wasted a precious drop! I took this recipe from "Winemaking by Simple Means" by Harold Peel.

It should be a very Happy Christmas if you get through this lot!

Strange things people do

A request for information has been received from someone who has a good crop of grapes and wants to preserve their juice as unfermented grape juice. Fancy asking a winemaker! I can only suggest storing it in the deep freeze and defrost as required.

Some members have been kindly sending stamps for reply but unfortunately are sticking them fully on to their letters or application forms. This has resulted in a lot of steam saturated documents, getting them free.

Nice things people do

Members when forwarding their rejoining fee sometimes include additional money as a donation. This is gratefully received.

That is all, until the next Issue - due late February, 1977. In the meantime, on behalf of the Executive, may I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year.

