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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WINE AND BEERMAKERS (AMATEUR)

NEWS AND VIEWS

MAY, 1980

NEWS

Dear Members,

My more perceptive readers will have noticed that there is a slight change of title. I have dropped the word 'Occasional' from the title. There is a reason for this: many years ago the Newsletter had rather uneven publication dates due, among other things, to the fact that it was printed, and due to the delays when involved with printers and the need to get copy to them so early that it was difficult to have a regular publishing date as a result of which most of the information was out of date. This was, I think, the reason for the use of the word 'Occasional'. When I took over as News Editor I managed to find a local typing agency who would not only type the copy but would also run off the copies. I only had to write the copy and I also landed myself with the laborious job of collating and stapling over 600 copies. But at least the News and Views has come out regularly and is as up-to-date with information as it is possible to get. I am also fortunate in that my typist is good enough to find most of my errors before she types them. This is much appreciated. As it is now "News and Views Regularly", I will in future leave out the word 'Occasional'.

The Blackpool Conference and Show started off cold and wet but finished in a blaze of sunshine. This, as one of my regular correspondents pointed out, also applied to the Conference and Show. Firstly, can I, on behalf of the Executive, apologise to those who were inconvenienced by the lack of room in the Imperial Hotel ballroom on the Friday evening. Here is the full explanation. When we booked Blackpool we were only able to book the Winter Gardens for the Saturday and Sunday. Due to regular bookings they could not find us any accommodation there for the Friday evening for the Social or the Judges' Briefing. After much negotiation we managed to book suitable Friday night accommodation at the Dixieland Bar. We also eventually received written acceptance of our booking, but although there was a verbal price quoted when we first booked the rooms, when they sent written confirmation they cleverly failed to mention the sum involved. Shortly before the Conference we received a letter from the Dixieland Bar administrators (not the Blackpool Council - all halls in the Borough are under private ownership) stating that they had a change of policy and that the Dixieland Bar was no longer available to our Association as they required the premises for a function of their own.

At this late date it meant we did not have anywhere for the Friday evening. Even though we had a contract there was no purpose to be served in fighting the Dixieland over their written agreement as they had failed to state a price and had we held them to their written word they could have stopped us by pricing us out of the market. The Executive were fully aware of the great store placed on the Friday night at the North West Federation Annual Conference which is always held at Pontin's Camp, Southport. The Executive were of the opinion that if we dropped the Friday night we would meet a lot of adverse comment. We eventually managed to get permission to use the Imperial Ballroom upon condition that we made them the Conference Hotel. This we gratefully accepted.

Only a couple of years ago we organised a Friday night Social when at Nottingham University and only about 300 came. This year over 600 must have tried to get into the Imperial Ballroom with its limited accommodation. Finding adequate accommodation has always been a headache and as the years go by it gets more difficult and more expensive. We are all sorry about the Friday evening but it is some consolation to know that it was free.

We had our second highest entry of 4,252 exhibits and for once there was plenty of room for the judges but everything being in one long line did make extra work for the stewards to stage the entries. I would like to pay a tribute to all the stewards who did a really first-class job. There were so many I cannot name them but one person does come to mind and that is Dorothy Haverson who I saw hard at work on Friday morning, afternoon and evening and again on the Saturday. It is the sort of thing that makes the wheels go round.

A word of thanks to our retiring Wine Queen, Mrs. Johnson, who represented N.A.W.B. with distinction during the year, and our congratulations to the new Wine Queen, Judy Lloyd, of Norton Winemakers - or is it Cleveland Wm? - who is a member of the North Yorks and South Durham Federation. I believe she is a member of two clubs. I am sure I will be told if I have got it wrong. At all events, we wish her a very happy year.

We were very sorry that our Vice Chairman and Awards Secretary, Roy Butcher, was unable, through a slipped disc, to attend at Blackpool. I know you will all wish him a speedy recovery. Reg Budge stepped in to take over the awards. Miss Evelyn Gould of Hull wrote to say that she regretted that she would not be able to attend Blackpool. Miss Gould, who has in the past been a regular at the Nationals, is in her eighties and naturally finds the travelling too much. She very kindly donated a painting which she had painted, valued at £70. This was donated to the Raffle and was greatly appreciated. Our thanks to our many friends who also help with their gifts towards the Raffle and Tombola.

The following stands were provided by the Trade:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Ritchie Products, KWIK Wine Kits | Manton & Fison, Malt Extracts |
| Hambledon Bard, Home Brew Kits | J. & M. Sales, Trophies, etc. |
| Itona, Wigan, Malt Extracts | Champre Products, Bottle Cleaners, etc. |

The Winter Gardens Ballroom provided a wonderful setting for the Saturday night Civic Reception when we were the guests of the Deputy Mayor of Blackpool who, with her fellow Councillors, appeared to have a great time talking to members.

A. G. M. BLACKPOOL

There was a good attendance for the A.G.M. Apologies were received from Mrs. Gould, Roy Butcher (ill), C.J.J. Barry (in U.S.A.).

Executive

The following persons were elected to the Executive without a vote :

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|
| G. Christmas | Mrs. S. Chiverton |
| B. Edwards | Mrs. S. Hill |
| K. L. Hill | Circles Rep; Mrs. M. Drysdale |
| D. B. Ives | Federation Rep.: M. Matthews |

Amendment to Rules

Proposed that: with effect from 1st July, 1980, the annual Subscription be increased from £3.50 to £4.00 per member and from £5.00 to £7.00 per married couple and, also, that the Registration fee be raised from £1.00 to £2.00 for newly joined members. (Member refers to an individual, a Circle or a Federation).

After discussion the above proposition was carried overwhelmingly.

Presidency

Mr. L. Stagg was requested to carry on as President for a further year. He was delighted to accept.

MEMBERSHIP Just a reminder that membership is due from July this year and, as carried at the A.G.M., the cost is £4.00 per head or £7.00 for husband and wife. Please forward to Jim Chettle, 45 Oak Tree Drive, Gedling, Notts. Re-joining forms are included with this News Letter. Do it now in case you forget.

PLEASE NOTE: JIM'S new telephone number is 0602.611519

It is with deep regret that we have to announce the death of Bill Millet, who was for many years a tower of strength on your Executive. Big genial Bill was for a number of years our Show Manager but, unfortunately, due to health reasons during latter years he has been sadly missing from the National scene. Our condolences are extended to his wife and family at this sad time.

EXECUTIVE POSTS YEAR 1980/81

Chairman: Sybil Hill Treasurer: Peter Awbery Hon. Secretary: Doug Ives
Vice Chairman and Awards Sec: Roy Butcher Membership Sec: Jim Chettle
Entries Sec: Norman Chiverton Show Manager: George Christmas Chief Steward:
Ken Bilham Convener of Judges: Maurice Matthews Supplies Officer: Norman
Chiverton Schedule Sec: Sybil Hill P.R.O. & Newsletter: Ken Hill Social
& Programme Sec: May Drysdale Fund Raiser & Asst. Treasurer: Brian Edwards
Minutes Sec. & Asst. Sec: Sarah Chiverton Conference Bookings Officer: Len Drysdale
Asst. Membership: Ken Bilham Asst. Awards: Jim Chettle & Doug. Ives Asst. Show
Manager: Len Drysdale.

Change of Address: Please note that Norman and Sarah Chiverton's new address
is Sutton View, Castle Lane, Woolscot, Warks. Telephone No. Rugby 810344.

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

According to a report in the Daily Star, 9th May, 1980, the National Union of Licensed
Victuallers are making overtures to the Government to persuade them to put a tax on wine
and beer Kits. This is something we must resist with all our vigour.

THE AYATOLLAH GETS THE BOOT(S)

It was reported that the Diplomatic staff of the British Embassy in Teheran
have had their supplies of wines and spirits stopped by the Iranian Government. It was
stated that Boots Wine and Beer Kits have suddenly become very popular in the Embassy.
(Daily Telegraph, 12.5.80).

NEW WINE SHIPPERS SOCIETY

For those interested in 'Commercial Wines' the International Wine Exchange Ltd., are the
proprietors of The Wine Shippers Society, an inaugural tasting has been arranged on
Saturday, 21st June, 1980, 10.0 a.m. to 2.0 p.m., with buffet lunch. Cost £4.75 per
head, at Weare Street, Ockley, Surrey. Further details from Kenneth R.T. Bilham,
The Wine Shippers Society, Weare Street, Ockley, Surrey; Tel. Oakwood Hill 0306 79 467.

Holidays Abroad

25th August - 8 days - Andalusia, Madrid, Granada, Seville, all meals, pte bath/shower
£179.00.

15th Sept. - 9 days - 5 Countries & Oberammergau. all meals £209.

Details from Ken Bilham, 96 Brogstock Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

1981 NATIONAL SHOW. EXETER UNIVERSITY. 29th, 30th and 31st March, 1981.

North West Federation Annual Conference and Show: Pontin's Camp, Ainsdale, Near
Southport, Lancs: 17th, 18th and 19th October, 1980.

Schedules and Booking forms from Mrs. Audrey Fordey, 226 Queensway, Rochdale, Lancs.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Bob Marsdon, 117 Haig Road, Hillingdon, Middlesex, UB8 3EQ.

Dear Ken,

Having just returned home from the Blackpool 'National', I feel I would like to pen
a few personal opinions about the weekend. Before doing so I must apologise for not
attending the A.G.M. This was unavoidable as my coach home was leaving soon after noon,
and it's a long road to Wembley as even the Liverpool footballers will tell you!

The weather at Blackpool started off wet and miserable, and ended up in a blaze of
sunshine. The social events of the Conference seemed to coincide with the weather.
It started with the Friday night fiasco, and ended with the Saturday night success.

I know the overcrowding at the Imperial Hotel was due to circumstances beyond the
committee's control. I am sure you will explain this in the "Newsletter". Writing
in retrospect of this experience, I would suggest that the National Executive should

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save themselves a lot of trouble, and the membership a lot of frustration and upset by omitting Friday night's social from their programme of events. This would allow circles and individuals to arrange their own social activities at their respective hotels, etc. The exception to this rule would be when the "National" is held in one complex (i.e. a University or Holiday Camp) when a general Friday night social would be an obvious necessity.

In contrast to Friday, Saturday nights dance was a great success. The Empress Ballroom was very adequate for our needs, with seating accommodation and dance floor space being quite comfortable.

I would now like to move on to the Show itself, and what I think is the biggest boob since Jane Russell. Whatever moved the committee to make it a rule that only Polish Spirit, or Vodka, could be used in fortification of Section 4? Take liqueurs for instance, Fruit Brandies! Whisky Liqueurs! Coffee Rum Liqueurs! all without the spirits that make them what they are. Tut! Tut!

I did not enter the Liqueur Class this year, so it isn't sour grapes, just confused amazement. Furthermore, we are often advised to try and emulate commercial wines, yet what commercial concern adds Polish Spirit or Vodka to its Port or Sherry? I am wondering.

On to the Flower Classes, excluding Elderflower. Here I ponder on the wisdom of no label stating type of flowers used, there being so many poisonous flowers that may be inadvertently used. It is all very well saying the entrant should know, but some years ago I made wine from dried Clover, which I bought at the wine counter of a well known chemist shop. After making this, I read that it was a suspect ingredient and was advised by 'The Amateur Winemaker' to throw it away! Incidentally, I have never seen dried clover in the shop since. Even national newspapers have published articles and photographs of people eating daffodils, yet I am sure I have read that these are also suspect. Winemakers looking for new ingredients could see such articles and decide to make wine from daffodils and the like. Perhaps I am over-cautious (being a Virgo) but I say better safe than sorry.

I now have something to say about the Annual Draw tickets. What concerns me is the cost of returning counterfoils. With a 12p stamp and 24p poundage on postal orders, it cost me 36p to return my quota this year. It will be dearer next year, as poundage goes up again tomorrow (1st April). I wouldn't mind giving this money to the Association, but I begrudge giving it to the Post Office. I therefore suggest that when tickets are sent out you advise us to give our monies and counterfoils to our Circle treasurers or secretaries, so that they may be returned in bulk. ~~These are the arrangements we expect to make next year at Wembley.~~ This will not only save individual expense but make less work for the Draw Promoter.

In conclusion, I would like to personally congratulate all winners at the National Show, and offer commiserations to those whom success eluded this year. Better luck! next year. I also offer sincere thanks to the committee, organisers and helpers, who made the 1980 Blackpool Conference a grand "National".

Yours fraternally in winemaking,
Bob Marsdon (Wembley Guild)

Letter from Derek A. Fraser, 172 Rochester Drive, Bexley, Kent, DA5 1QG.

Dear Ken,

The Aperitif class in any Wine Show is one which is almost guaranteed to arouse criticism from competitors. Over a number of years I have heard a variety of complaints from just as many entrants who have felt confounded because they believe that the judge was looking for a particular style of aperitif when they had entered a different style. Indeed a letter of mine, expressing such points of view was published in The Amateur Winemaker several years ago.

Since becoming a judge of wine and more particularly since passing the examinations of the National Guild of Wine and Beer Judges a couple of years ago, I have become even more interested in the problems associated with this class. Being on the other side of the fence I have taken the opportunity to judge this class of wine whenever possible - from club level, through federation level and culminating this year by judging it together with Stan Trivett in the members' section of the National, where this class

Yes, there are difficulties associated with the aperitif class which probably encompasses a wider variety of wines than any other class. Some Show organisers get over this problem by either dividing the class into two or by specifying a type of aperitif which may be entered: dry aperitif; sherry-type or dry aperitif; vermouth type, perhaps specifying each of these two types in alternate years. Indeed, this latter solution is the one which my own federation (The North West Kent) is now advocating.

In some respects, this solution is fine. On the one hand, the judge has a far easier task, knowing much more precisely what he is expected to be judging whilst on the other hand, the competitors also know what sort of aperitif to enter and cannot be deterred by the thought that the judge may be biased towards another type of aperitif.

Nevertheless, my own personal view is that although this approach overcomes such problems, it is in itself rather restrictive. Obviously the dry sherry and vermouth style wines are two of the major classes of wine which fit the definition of "stimulating the appetite". But apart from these, the citrus wines are another major group of wines which frequently fall within this category as well as the many 'miscellaneous' wines which are frequently made with the primary intention of being "appetisers". Are all such other wines to be excluded from entry into the aperitif class? If so, there will be many winemakers who will be unable to enter their particular style of aperitif into competition which, in turn, is likely to reduce the number of wines submitted in this class - the nightmare of many Show secretaries is a low entry number.

No, I feel that provided the Show secretary is able to engage one or two judges who are aware of the difficulties of assessing such a wide variety of wines fairly, without any bias (including negative bias!) towards his or her 'own likes or dislikes', then that Show should continue to include an aperitif class with no further restrictions other than to define the degree of dryness required.

Of course it can always be argued that the Show secretary does not always know the judges' whom he is inviting, let alone whether those judges feel confident to tackle a problematical class such as the aperitifs. Whilst realising that in certain Shows there are likely to be many volunteers to judge some classes whilst other classes are likely to attract no volunteers, I believe that the National has taken a lead by asking those judges who are invited, which classes they would prefer to judge. By this means an active decision is made by each judge at an early stage and only those who have duly considered the problems of such a class are likely to list it as a preferred class to judge.

Although such a practice could eventually result in a few judges becoming labelled as 'specialists' for certain classes, I feel that this is preferable to the class being allocated to a judge who may previously have given little thought to that particular type of wine.

Yours sincerely,

Derek A. Fraser

(EDITOR'S reply to Mr. Fraser):-

I agree with Mr. Fraser about the difficulties of judging the Aperitif class. There are over 57 varieties of aperitifs. In the North West Federation we have four classes for Aperitifs; two classes vermouth type and two classes excluding vermouth type herbs. We also have sherry classes for those that make sherry. To-date it has seemed to work and the judging of the aperitif excluding vermouth-type herbs has been made much easier.

Mr. Fraser also mentioned about the National convener asking judges which class they preferred. This is not a National attitude but was just the way adopted by the Convener at Blackpool. Personally I think that the amount of work involved in finding classes for judges in which they have not entered wine a big enough task in itself without having to find which class they prefer to judge.

As Convener for N.W. Federation, the only class I would do this for is Liqueurs.

Mr. Fraser also sent along a poem which, due to lack of space, will appear in the next issue. Ken Hill, Editor.

Letter from Stan Baker, Chatham, Kent.

Assessing wine quality is a highly subjective task and whether the number of wines to be assessed is few or many, the sensitivity of the palate is seriously affected unless a suitable palate refresher is used between samples.

Several years ago I met the late Frank Sparkes, the convener at the first 'National' held at Andover; he recommended to me a palate refresher of cold tea mixed with a little lemon juice. For one reason or another, I have never used the tea/lemon mixture, instead making use of the local domestic water supply. This admittedly can vary considerably from region to region, and as I eat nothing during a stint - neither biscuits, bread, cheese or apple - the variance in taste of the local water is easily discerned.

The local water supply in North Kent is filtered through hundreds of feet of rock and to my taste has a refreshing flavour. A few miles south and the local water tastes relatively sweet. Obviously a neutral flavour or even non-flavour is desirable, but the cost of buying "topping up" water for batteries would be rather expensive. I believe that de-ionised water can be obtained from the melting ice which forms in the domestic refrigerator, but other readers may have better ideas for a palate refresher.

Stan Baker.

Letter from V. Whitehouse, 17 Cranford Road, Paignton.

Dear Ken,

Re: N.A.W.B. Programme & Schedules

As a member of the NAWB and as a member of the National Guild of Judges, I am writing on behalf of the National Judges (South Western Region)

We find that every year or so the N.A.W.B. Programme and Schedule is changed and often for the better. However, we find that new classes are introduced without notice and many members do not get the chance to brew the new class, as it is not known until the programme and schedule is received by the members.

Please note the following classes over the last few years that have been so introduced:

1. Lager into British and Continental
2. Brown ale into London and Newcastle types
3. Kit Beer (Bitter Beer), introduced this year again with no warning from the NAWB.

(Note: this also happens with the wine classes)

Surely it is time that these new classes can be notified in the News Letter, to help members. It would also give you something to write about that is concrete and of interest to the members.

Yours sincerely,

Vernon Whitehouse

Editor's reply:

Dear Vernon,

Point taken. I will ensure that any changes in the classes for the Exeter National, 1981, are published in the next issue of News and Views, following their acceptance by the Executive. Ken Hill, Editor.

Letter from Dr. P. B. Dransfield, 23 Royden Avenue, Runcorn, WA7 4SP.

The National Guild of Wine and Beer Judges' Handbook

The current edition of this Handbook (revised October, 1978) is likely to remain the "Bible" and guide to Judges, Exhibitors and Show Organisers for the next twelve months or more, so it is well worth buying! The Guild's N.E.C. recognises that this is due for revision & amplification, particularly in its technical sections. This will be no mean task! It has therefore been agreed in Committee that I organise this revision with the aid of the Guild's technical Panel to produce a revised version which is acceptable to the Guild and will help all Wine makers and Beer makers. We will, therefore, take due note of relevant articles which appear in such publications as the A.W. and the N.A.W.B. "News and Views". There is no guarantee, however, that all the advice so given will be lifted "verbo intacto" into the revised handbook (This would be rather difficult to achieve since already some of this advice is contradictory).

Incidentally, I rather like the comparison of the likes of me with an ostrich once the errors have been put right. This simile appeared in a recent copy of the A.W. Contrary to the picture of an ostrich portrayed in this article a recent programme on "Wildlife on One" showed a quite different picture.

In the B.B.C. version the ostrich is a very swift and alert bird, never puts its head in the sand - and its sex life can be just "fantastic"!

P. B. Dransfield,

Vice Chairman, N.G.W.B.J.

Letter from Roy Roycroft, 44 Newell Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP3 9PB

Dear Ken,

I'm pleased to see more letters in NAVO and hope the trend continues.

So that related subject matter is given together I am splitting my answers to letters (Feb. issue) from Mr. Frank Scholes and Mr. D.W. Lancaster.

WINE TYPES

Regarding Mr. Lancaster's remarks about Aperitif I agree that I omitted to include "The flavour should not be strong and the aftertaste should be short".

Mr. Scholes' query re tannin in white wine may seem simple (and Ken Hill would welcome many more of your simple queries - don't be afraid of appearing ignorant, there are always many others with the same query or who know less), but is very valid.

It is true that for commercial white wines bunches of grapes including stalks may go into the presses and that a high level of tannin, for a white wine, could be extracted from the stalks. However, the pressing is rapid so that little tannin is actually extracted. Even so the best wines are often made from the first run and lesser wines from the second. The pressing for some wines is also very light. The average tannin content of a commercial white is below 0.5 gms per litre which is ten times or more less than in reds. To get the tannin in red wines the grapes are destalked and the skins and pips only fermented. The latest theory with considerable evidence in support is that red grapes (and it would apply to stalks as well) contain no tannins though tannin can be extracted. They contain only the precursors of tannins and a wine's tannin content depends on the condition of the grape and the method of extraction. Probably this also applies to all other dark red fruits.

Amateurs make wines from such a wide range of ingredients; some without any tannin potential and by different methods that problems of clarity can and do arise. Books can therefore rightly recommend the addition of tannin to white wines when it is necessary for clearing. This is not to give the wine a tannin content but to assist fining because many fining agents clear wine solely by reaction with the tannin. (Addition of tannin for fining would not be necessary in dark red wines but could be needed in light reds). Unless too much is put into white wine the tannin is 'lost' during the clearing.

(May I suggest Mr. Scholes that if you wish to know more about these fining reactions you refer to past numbers of Wines for All Seasons, by Prof. G. Fowles or to The Encyclopedia of Winemaking by Ben Turner & Roy Roycroft).

SHOW SCHEDULES BY TYPE & SWEETNESS

I well understand and sympathise with Frank Scholes' comments, so first may I repeat my personal opinion that I have frequently stated through different channels:

The primary purpose for making wine is the challenge of making and the pleasure of drinking it. Therefore you should make wine to suit your own likes, regardless of whether others consider them to be 'right' or 'wrong'. Should you like port with pork, or mousey wines, then that is what you should try to make, but if your tastes are other than normal average it is not advisable to inflict them on other people. BUT if you enter wines in a Show they should be to a standard for judging, and that standard should be the highest quality for type as recognised from centuries of wine drinking. Again but! Judges can only do this if the Show Schedule permits, i.e. has classes by type (purpose). Basically it is about these standards that I have written. Have no fear that the Show Schedules by type would prevent entering wines that had been made without purpose. Also method of making and the wines do not have to be altered. If they finish as Aperitif or table (true dessert is unlikely as it has to be purpose-made) they can be entered accordingly. If they do not they could be entered under Social which covers the bulk of wines made by amateurs. There could be a class for every wine that is made. It can also be added that wine classes by type in no way whatsoever restricts scheduling from the smallest to the largest Shows. Schedules could be according to the Show committee's choice ranging from two classes (such as Table White and Table Red) through four (Social white and red dry - Social white and red sweet) to more classes

than would be wanted, solely by subdivision. For instance the format of the National Schedule could be grouped as at present:-

APERITIF		(a) Red) could also be subdivided by ingredient		
		(b) White			
TABLE WHITE	(a)	Apple	(b)	etc.	Each group can be divided into more groups by the addition of very dry, dry, medium sweet, or sweet, as wanted.
TABLE ROSE	(a)	Blackberry	(b)	etc.	
TABLE RED	(a)	Bilberry	(b)	etc.	
DESSERT WHITE	(a)	Gooseberry	(b)	etc.	
DESSERT RED	(a)	Elderberry	(b)	etc.	
SOCIAL WHITE	(a)	Rhubarb	(b)	etc.	
SOCIAL ROSE	(a)	Raspberry	(b)	etc.	
SOCIAL RED	(a)	Stone fruit	(b)	etc.	

Each type group has its own sweetness standard, as listed later, but by the addition of dry or sweet other standards of lesser or greater sweetness are clearly indicated. For instance, Table White would be wine without recognisable sweetness. Table White Dry would have the lower levels of detectable sweetness and Table White Sweet would have a slight recognisable sweetness.

This type of scheduling not only limits to the minimum possible argument of whether a wine is too sweet or not sweet enough, it also defines the type/purpose of the wine and thereby clearly indicates what the characteristics of the wine should be. It should result in most uniform judging practicable.

Having admitted that the part of Mr. Lancaster's letter about Aperitif is correct, it is all the more unfortunate that I have to say the remainder of his letter is inaccurate, or the wrong inferences have been made, so that it is dangerous to readers of News & Views who put wines in Shows. (Sorry, Doug, but I shall be giving fact not opinion).

I will try to give facts without technicalities and as a start, quote extracts from 'Flavour & Aroma in Wine' by Dr. J. G. Carr, which was written as non-technically as possible for the amateur winemaker. Note that the extracts are from Chapter 2 "Tasting", and the word 'flavours' is used in this text to refer to our four tastes - salt, sour, sweet and bitter.

"The threshold for a particular substance can be divided into two parts. The first is the threshold value defined as the minimum detectable concentration for a substance. That is to say, the detection of a substance without actually recognising it as a flavour. In addition, there is the recognition threshold which is the minimum concentration at which a substance can be recognised as one of the basic flavours. This is usually higher than the true threshold value. For bitterness the two values are closer together than the other tastes. Thresholds vary with age, sex and even time of day. (My underlining)

Table 1.

Effect of age on taste threshold Values

Sweet:	<u>30-44</u>	<u>45-59</u>	<u>75-89</u>	
	0.522	0.604	0.914	"

(Salt, acid and bitter are also quoted but we are not concerned with them here)

The detectable sweetness is what is usually referred to as dryness in a Table wine, and that one table wine can be considered as drier than another shows that there are varying degrees in the detectable but not recognisable sweetness. Further evidence that this is so lies in the fact that many substances other than sugar have sweetness. Included in these is alcohol which has to be present for a wine to be a wine, and glycerol, present if only in small quantity. Thus if it was assumed that a wine contained no unfermentable sugar; which is unlikely; it must have a degree of sweetness from the alcohol and glycerol however low. I repeat - all wines have a degree of sweetness.

Correct the inferences of the second and third paragraphs of Mr. Lancaster's letter: Firstly - as stated in the above extract - sweetness thresholds change "even with the time of day". To this can be added, any change in health or bodily condition, though fatigue and smoking appear to have no effect. Also, certain substances can reduce perception, and the recognition of sweetness can be by comparison with what has previously been in the mouth. (This latter can easily be checked by sampling a sweetish wine, eating a piece of chocolate and then retasting the wine. Note the difference between the two tastings of the wine). Secondly, in 'The Alchemy of Taste' reference is given to researches of Henry Gault & Christian Millau, who subjected cases of good Bordeaux wine to freezing, heating, exposing to light and trouncing around Paris in the boot of a car. Heating and exposure to light ruined the wine but it coped very well with cold and bouncing only affected wines which had a sediment, i.e. they became cloudy.

In view of the foregoing it is logical to say the degree of a wine's sweetness is not altered by rebottling for competition, being shaken on the way to a Show or between morning and evening tastings, but that any difference in sweetness is the result of variation in personal perception between the two tastings. The most probable of the variations is whatever has been in the mouth preceding the tastings, or the difference in time of day. With judging a dry class on the Show bench a number of wines near the upper detectable limit followed by a recognisably slightly sweet one could result in the slightly sweet being accepted if the mouth was not adequately cleansed between each wine. Tasted again later away from the Show bench, the sweetness could be recognised depending on what had previously been eaten or drank. A question of comparison.

Neither a panel of judges nor statistical analysis are necessary to have a good standard of judging of dry/sweetness at Shows. If the detection and recognition of sweetness is under-rated, as it should be by judges, the following are all that are necessary to ensure the good standard.:-

1. Show organisers should arrange for judging to commence as early as possible in the morning.
2. If a judge knows he/she will be judging Aperitif, Table or Social dry, the eating or drinking of sweet substances should be avoided before judging. If it is not known, the mouth should be thoroughly cleansed.
3. The judge's mouth should be cleansed* (not with cheese) between each wine.
4. The judge should know personal threshold recognition of sweetness in comparison with average and allow for personal lesser or greater sensitivity.

*Footnote

Not necessary in commercial tastings which are of similar wines because the wines being similar they are assessed for sweetness as much by comparison as otherwise. Amateur wines on the Show bench have such wide variation that cleansing is necessary to prevent 'hang-over'.

Water, or better still, a sharp apple followed by water, are considered the best cleansers. Cheese is not a cleanser because it coats the mouth with grease. Excellent for parties because the cheese hides the shortcomings of the wine.

My advice to exhibitors is to select and segregate Show 'possibles' into dry and sweet at any time. Then make the final selection for 'dry' classes in the morning before breakfast and the early morning cup of tea if you have sugar in it.

To complete the picture for sweetness by wine type a list is given below:-

- | | | |
|----------------|--|---|
| Aperitif | - no recognizable sweetness | } the norm for Aperitif and Table is no recognizable sweetness. Therefore no need to add 'dry' but if added the wines should be of the lowest detectable sweetness. |
| Aperitif sweet | - very slight recognizable sweetness | |
| Table | - no recognizable sweetness | |
| Table sweet | - slight recognizable sweetness | |
| Rose | - slight recognizable sweetness (the norm requires no qualification) | |
| Rose dry | - no recognizable sweetness | |
| Rose sweet | - medium recognizable sweetness | |
| Dessert | - near 'syrup' but the wine should be so balanced) the norm. No that sweetness is not a separate characteristic) qualification | |
| Dessert dry | - A definite recognizable sweetness but less sweet than dessert | |

- Dessert dry - A definite recognizable sweetness but less sweet than dessert.
- Social - slight recognizable sweetness (the norm requires no qualification)
- Social dry - no recognizable sweetness
- Social sweet - Medium to full recognizable sweetness
- Sparklin very dry - mid-detectable sweetness
- Sparkling dry - upper level of detectable /lowest level recognizable sweetness
- Sparkling sweet - A little recognizable sweetness
- Oxidised very dry - lowest levels of detectable sweetness
- Oxidised dry - no detectable sweetness
- Oxidised med. sw. - middles levels of recognizable sweetness
- Oxidised sweet - higher levels of recognizable sweetness

These standards are readily assessable when the difference between detectable and recognizable sweetness is understood and that 'dry' means 'less sweet than'

All the best,
Roy Roycroft

Letter from Douglas W. Lancaster, Flat 110 Queen's Quay, 58 Upper Thames Street, London EC4V 3EH.

Dear Ken,

Roy Roycroft has sent me a copy of his letter of 19th March to you, which enables me to comment as follows:

"Roy Roycroft should have made it clear that he was using the word 'detectable' with a special meaning, that is - for example - 'I can detect a difference between A and B, although I cannot recognise what it is'. Obviously, if one detects sweetness, one has recognised it.

The point of my remarks was that sweetness is a subjective assessment, liable to be influenced in many ways. The problem is how to achieve agreement between assessments by different people and I suggested established and reliable ways of doing this. For better, for worse, when our wines are judged, there is usually only one judge and one assessment.

Nothing that Roy has written (which, indeed, are the facts and which the opinions?) persuades me that my letter was inaccurate or the inferences in it wrong."

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely,
Douglas W. Lancaster.

Once again, the winning letter was by Roy Roycroft, Hemel Hempstead. Congratulations, Roy - you have given the readers much food for thought. Thanks, also, to all who have contributed with letters. At Blackpool many Newsletter readers said how much they enjoyed reading the letters you send to me. (Ken Hill, Editor)

N.A.W.B. 1980 NATIONAL SHOW TROPHY WINNERS

N.A.W.B. MASTER TROPHIES - WINE

"It is with regret that your Executive has become aware of certain discrepancies in the calculation of certain point additions, in respect of a number of trophies. The following trophies have now been re-allocated as follows:-

Amateur Winemakers Shield	to	Nottingham Winemakers
Eric Malin Trophy	to	Tynes' National
Bastin Cup	to	E. L. Clarke
Boots Trophy	to	B. T. Lawson
Temple Tankard	to	Vernon Whitehouse and K. Lovell

Your Executive offer their sincere apologies to those members who were unfortunately wrongly awarded trophies upon the Sunday morning at Blackpool. We also apologise to those members to whom we are now belatedly awarding trophies.

Steps are being taken to overcome the difficulties which we experienced this year."

Signed, K. L. HILL, P.R.O., on behalf of the N.A.W.B. Executive.

N.A.W.B. TROPHY to A. M. MALLINSON

Bournemouth Master Winemake Cup	- Mr. Ken Barnes, Wembley
Hill Cup	- L. Williams, Twickenham
Cedric Austin Cup	- Mr. T. Lang, Nottingham
'Amateur Winemakers' Shield	- Nottingham
Nottingham Trophy	- Tyneside Nationals
Marconi Club Trophy	- Nottingham
N.A.W.B. Beer Trophy	- South Devon
'Chempro' Trophy	- North Humberside
Association of Federation Trophy	- Yorkshire
Vina Trophy	- L. Williams, Twickenham
Eric Malin Memorial Trophy	- A. Darby
Bastin Cup	- E. L. Clarke
Roycott Cup	- N. M. Dixon, Brixham
Bilham Tastevin	- T. McArthur, North Shields
Audrey Newton Cup	- A. Howard, Ace of Clubs
Harold Beall Memorial Cup	- J. E. Burgess, E. Grinstead
Turner Trophy	- R. B. Brooksbank, Nottingham
Rankin Trophy	- L. Rushworth, Huddersfield
Timmins Trophy	- R. C. Jenkins, Stroud
Shaw Porter Cup	- K. Barnes, Wembley
Atcherley Trophy	- Ken Barnes, Wembley
Andrews Cup	- G. Christmas
Heriff Trophy	- Mr. & Mrs. M. W. Parsons, Nottingham
Southern Vineyards Trophy	- K. Barnes, Wembley
Loftus Cup	- N. Chiverton
Hidalgo Trophy	- G. Sparrow, Tyneside Nationals
Gordon Instone Cup	- Mr. & Mrs. M. W. Parsons, Nottingham
Boots Trophy	- B. T. Lawson, Bexley Heath
Tom Caxton Trophy	- Mr. C. Clarke, Yorkshire
Wilf Newsom Cup	- K. J. Barber, Kent
Temple Tankard	- V. Whitehouse & K. Lovell
'Itona' Tankard	- Mr. J. K. Barber, Kent
Muntona Trophy	- Mr. T. D. Hopkinson, North Shields
Cordon Brew Trophy	- Mr. K. Lovell, Newcastle on Tyne
Sweet 'n' Dry Cup	- Mr. R. B. Brookbanks, Nottingham
Tilly Timbrell Trophy	- Mrs. W. Mitchell, West Yorks

Tom Caxton. Best Bitter Beer in Britain

The preliminary heats of this competition which were held in the competing Federations have been held and the Final will be judged in Bristol during the World Wine Fair in late July.

BRISTOL WORLD WINE FAIR

The World Wine Fair will again be held in Bristol from 16th to 26th July. The Decanter Wine Magazine is advertising a £2 reduction - details in the June issue. Last year British Rail also ran a reduced rail fare plus entrance fee. Anyone thinking of going there by rail would do well to enquire at the booking office to ascertain if they are offering similar reductions this year.

Advance bookings for the fair from Exhibition Complex, Cannon Road, Bristol, BS1. Telephone 0272.213381/2.

K. L. HILL,
EDITOR

18 Laxton Road,
Liverpool, 25.