

Aug 1983

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WINE AND BEER MAKERS

NEWS AND VIEWS



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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WINE AND BEERMAKERS (AMATEUR)

NEWS AND VIEWS

AUGUST 1983

Dear Members

Well, what a response to the 'new-look' News and Views! I will let the comments speak for themselves, but cannot include the whole of the letters otherwise there would be little room for any other news. Thankfully, only one person raised any criticism and as this was sent anonymously our Chairman has intervened to give his personal answer on one of the following pages.

From Ken Hill (Liverpool), a previous Editor and now Immediate Past President

Excellent,..... (a man of few words! Ed. Sorry to have missed you at the World Wine Fair)

From Sybil Hill, Executive Committee

Congratulations..... We will be happy to give Roger Peck a 25th engraved glass and will either give it to you next time we meet, or will post when we return from hols.

From Ron Ekins (Formby), Scribe for the Monthly Diary in the 'Amateur Winemaker'

Congratulations on the Newsletter - aggression, tact and suavity, so beautifully blended ..... (I am told you present your column beautifully too! Ed.)

From George Christmas, (Bosham), Show Manager for many years

.....vast improvement.....

Vic Goffen (Petersfield) Hon. Secretary to the Guild of Judges

.....very well presented.....

From Maurice Hughes (Chingford) National Judge

.....I think 'News and Views' is a great improvement. More power to your elbow....

From another Maurice - our Chairman

Many thanks for the first of a new series of Newsletters, very well done indeed. I'm sure it will start off a new interest in what is going on, what we plan to do, and lift us out of the .....

From one of our 'regulars' - Stan Baker (Chatham)

Congratulations, on the new look 'News and Views'. The Newsletter, now presented

A5 size in booklet form could lend itself to being easily filed for future reference so that regular contributors are able to refer back to previous letters and ensure that they do not contradict themselves! The first new-style newsletter was mainly letters of criticism, (only four, including yours! Ed.) but they are part of the democratic process and, hopefully, future letters to the Editor will be more cheerful. The Editor wisely restored the balance by his informative and often highly amusing commentary and this permitted a more representative picture of the Association's activities.

To some, the National is one of the highlights of the year and although I criticised the Southampton week-end it was the distance between buildings rather than the standard of accommodation that made it possibly the worst National ever. I appreciate that some people would rather spend more money on personal comfort and would prefer National venues at seaside towns which offer a wider range of accommodation, Britain is moving away from its role as an industrial nation and big money is being invested in tourist centres. The NAWB Executive Committee would do well to explore some of the venues which the National has not previously visited as I am sure there are several places that could accommodate the Association following a slight decrease in the membership.

(If you, Stan, or anyone else can advise the Committee of appropriate venues, all those thought suitable will be followed up. Remember, we require one room of about 5000 sq. ft. for the show, a hall and a stage for the dances for 800 people, as well as an area for the trade stands and side rooms for administration etc. Ed.)

From Alice and Gerry Gilding-Thompson (Yattenden) - 1st Year Members

As new NAWB members our first National Show at Southampton was most interesting and enlightening. We thoroughly enjoyed the week-end and considering the gremlins plus very large area covered by the University complex, commend all concerned with the administration. We look forward to 1984's 'National' especially as those who should know speak so highly of the Nottingham venue.

No doubt familiarisation will eventually have us reaching for the critical pen; meanwhile we look forward to the continuation of your informal and racy style in the next quarterly Newsletter.

More power to your elbow.

Alice and Gerry Gilding-Thompson

(I cannot guarantee it being 'racy', but I'll try to keep it 'informal'. Ed. Incidentally, I hope you find your Penedes Wine Tour as enjoyable and educational - after a letter like this, obviously first drinks will have to be 'on me!')

Brian and Phyllis Williamson (Harpenden) 2nd Year Members

My wife and I very much enjoyed your chatty NAWB Newsletter which explained away a lot of the hiccoughs. We were also very amused at your account of the (unmentionable, Ed.) Guilds misunderstanding over your gallon of elderberry wine and the Circle signboard. Unfortunately, I am due to give them a talk on the Californian tour, so expect to receive a lot of 'flak' when I mention 'TASTERS'!!!

You will no doubt have seen Part I of the South African Wine Safari in the July issue of the 'Amateur Winemaker', with Part II of the intrepid explorers adventures to follow in August.....

(As it happens, I haven't! Ed. It may be that Cyril Berry (as our President this year) is as yet unaware that I am, so to speak, (his) P.R.O. and Newsletter Editor. On the other hand, its not beyond the realms of possibility that my complimentary copies have been delayed in the post!)

Having mentioned complimentary, from the telephone calls received, the two most complimentary calls were from Ben Turner (the Committee's severest critic in the last Newsletter) who rang me upon his return from the West Country and whose eloquence I am unable to portray in a single issue of the Newsletter. The other call came from George Lashbrook, who was a member of the Committee last year and who was phoning from the West Country.

I am obliged to both gentlemen for sparing the time and also to all those members I met at the World Wine Fair and at recent shows.

One such show was the Mid Southern Federation which this year has switched venues from Petersfield to Hayling Island. It has always been a well organised show since the far-off Portsmouth days and the exhibitors certainly know how to make wine but, to get to the briefing on time nowadays, one would have to rise at the unearthly hour of about 5 o'clock in the morning. It was fortuitous that only three weeks before the Show an advertisement appeared for Warners Holiday Centres on the island inviting would-be holiday makers to try out their facilities for 24 hours, full-board for the incredible amount of just £8.05 (incl. VAT). Having found to my absolute amazement that the Camp was within 200 yards of the Show upon telephoning Warners I was informed that a chalet was available on the Friday, no need to send a deposit, just turn up before lunchtime and the keys would be handed over at reception.

Naturally, one tends to be suspicious of things handed on a plate and odious inexactitudes such as surcharges, cover charges, taxes, supplements, extras for bath w.c. etc. are anticipated on the final account but, if any judges are thinking of an overnight stay next year (leave room for me) I can assure you there are no such extras whatsoever. The price includes the usual full facilities, sports etc. as well as 3 meals, a dance, cabaret, Bingo(!) et al. I had the swimming pool to myself at 7.30 on the Saturday morning, breakfast at 8.30 and left the camp at 5 minutes to 9 o'clock, with time in hand for a cup of coffee before the briefing.

Having given first prize in a large class to the Federation President (those new £1 coins are hardly noticeable in the punts!) I feel reasonably confident of receiving an invitation to judge again next year and if Warners are still solvent, I'll be there!

Incidentally, it's so well camouflaged that I took longer to find it than Southampton University!

And now, in order to blend the good news with 'suavity' here is a more sober observation from my counterpart, Tony Nicholls, the new Editor of the Newsletter from the Guild of Judges

His commencing paragraph reads: ' I have just received my copy of News and Views and must confess that I am very impressed with the layout' and he continues 'What a pity the content is so depressing'.

Well, now, as you all know I am a most moderate sort of chap and not one to take umbrage but in my innocence I thought the 'content' was reasonably up-lifting - the depressing part, I felt, was mainly due to letters received from two members of the Guild!

Mr Nicholls follows on with, 'I was also concerned to read the following and I hope that the NAWB Editor will forgive me for breaching his copyright'

I'll forgive you on this occasion, Mr Nicholls, if only, in future, my comments are quoted in full - there's no point in extracting the one paragraph you have without continuing with the following two. A less sophisticated person than myself may well have suggested this deserves a kick in the 'breaches!' And without wishing to be too critical of a new boy, you've certainly got your knickers in a twist regarding my definitions of Stewards (the workers and the tasters). They are not necessarily a single breed and I am completely in agreement with you in regard to the 'tasters'. Unfortunately, I am unable to breach your copyright (your Newsletter being confidential to the Members of the Guild), but my classification of a 'Working' Steward is one of that grand bunch who hump bottles, tables and chairs, who stand for hours on the Tombola Stand, who type results sheets ad infinitum, who guard the trophies, who sell raffle tickets in the evening and all those who willingly carry out the 101 other jobs in an endeavour to make the show a success. Without THEM there would be no Show.

Without, what you term, ' the ubiquitous professional steward' the Show COULD go on!! I shall be most interested to read Judges comments regarding stewards in your next Newsletter.

Apart from the foregoing, Tony, I think the Newsletter is very good - a pity it can't be a touch more professionally produced, especially in view of the subscriptions we have to pay to the Guild!

And whilst on the subject of the Guild, here are some criticisms and suggestions from Stan Baker, which you may like to place before your Executive Committee:

'I am pleased that the National Guild of Wine and Beer Judges has published a completely new handbook of interest to Judges, exhibitors and Show organisers. I congratulate the Judges who were responsible for reshaping the approach to the competitive side of the craft and particularly welcome the increase up to fifty points in wine assessment with its emphasis on bouquet, flavour and balance.

Long overdue is the approach to assessment of presentation, clarity and colour and the recommendation that - " a long drawn out witch hunt for minor flaws should be avoided". Rightly so, in my experience of wine assessment all the available time is usually needed for correctly assessing the subtleties of the better wines. I was disappointed in that the NAWB handbook did not state that "staging" was non-essential. Fifteen years ago I considered that staging -the erection of wooden planking above the table tops - was a waste of valuable time. This cosmetic approach does nothing to improve the quality of wine and is totally unknown in the world of commercial tastings. The practice of erecting staging is a "dinosaur" from the days when wine shows were linked with the flower and vegetable show and, in my opinion, the erection of staging should now be discontinued.

Most wine shows usually take place when the weather is reasonably temperate but there are occasions when Nature needs a little help. The recent "heat-wave" made the chilling of white wines virtually essential; it would not have been possible to have assessed quality wines without ensuring they were cool. More often than not it is cold weather and its effect on the assessment of red wines that creates a difficult problem for the Judges.

THE JUDGES HANDBOOK, IN MY OPINION, SHOULD HAVE INDICATED A CHANGE OF TECHNIQUE IN THE ASSESSMENT OF FULL BODIED RED WINES ON COLD DAYS. THE REASON FOR THIS WILL NOT BE FULLY UNDERSTOOD UNLESS ONE APPRECIATES THAT RED WINE IS NOT COMPOSED OF THE SAME SUBSTANCES AS WHITE WINE.

It took some believing at the time, but this scientific fact was impressed upon me, in no uncertain terms, by George Wilks; then of the Wine Development Board, the organisation prompting wine appreciation throughout Britain. George was well qualified to make the statement, having been trained as a chemist, then becoming a science teacher, retiring as Headmaster and finally becoming the Secretary of the WDB. I invited George to present a wine tasting recently and requested that he reiterate his statement of several years before; which he did - without any change in the text. "In general, the substances which make the bouquet and the body have a higher molecular weight in red wines than in white wines, giving rise to low volatility in red wines and high volatility in white wines."

In layman's terms it means that the more complex a wine is, the more attention must be given to conditions of serving such as air and temperature. In general, white wines are slightly chilled and full-bodied red wines are usually allowed to breathe. I must admit that low tannin red wines are occasionally slightly chilled, but in terms of assessing home-made wines it is accepted that a red table dry would be full-bodied.

Over chilled white wines are not a problem to the Judge. Because of its high volatility it needs only a few seconds of warmth from hands cupped around the partly-filled glass to raise the temperature and the bouquet and flavour are much more easily detectable.

Gums used for the labels on bottles such as Champagne wines are meant to be immersed in ice before serving and are water-resistant. Unlike the water soluble gum that is used on the back of home-made wine labels which dissolve as the bottle becomes wet from condensation following storage in a refrigerator. The label may then slip and the bottle could fall out of the steward's hands and much winemaking effort would be wasted.

Dry ice bags are possibly the best method of cooling home-made white wines. Heavy bodied red wines are best when they are allowed to breathe and when the temperature of the wine has reached "au chambre" temperature. This allows the low volatile substances and other substances produced during long years of bottle maturation to rise. When the bottle stink has dissipated the more subtle nuances of the wine are able to be detected.

From personal experience I have found that assessing home-made red wines in a venue where the temperature is less than comfortable is a long-drawn out job. Tapping the partly filled glass with the hands for a minute or two only marginally improves the body and bouquet; wines of low volatility need sustained warmth and ample time to breathe.

If the judge lacks imagination and follows the accepted system laid down by the National Guild of Wine and Beer Judges; that is, marking each wine in turn, the earlier wines - when sampled - may not be "showing" at their best and may not get a second chance to show their true merits.

Usually we have to "stick with the rules" but in areas where sensitivity is the supreme arbiter then I consider it best to adapt to the situation and develop methods which give the best results. For example, the palate is easily shocked by a bad wine and one should not be expected to correctly assess the true qualities of another wine immediately afterwards.

The method I have chosen to adopt is to proceed, without long deliberation, through all of the wines in the class, discarding and writing a comment on those wines with very obvious faults. Wines that only have minor faults I put on one side together with those wines that initially do not have detectable faults. This approach often means much more work; up to half of the wines in the class may need to be assessed a second time, but the fact that the palate can remain on a more sensitive level makes the effort worth-while.

The "two-stage" assessment system has several advantages. The removal of some wine at the first assessment stage allows space above the remaining wine for a larger quantity of air. Consequently, although the cork stopper has been replaced (I cannot imagine that competitors would allow the cork stoppers to be placed adjacent to the wines; they would insist that the correct cork stopper had not been replaced) the wine can breathe, release any bottle stink and then develop.

On most days of the year the air temperature increases as the morning progresses, so the additional time on the show bench allows the red wines to absorb warmth and become more volatile. Minor faults, possibly undetectable at the first assessment now become obvious and these are now discarded, suitable comments having been made on the judging sheet. The remaining wines should prove to be the best in the class.

A change of technique is well worth considering at Shows held in the colder months of the year or when there is insufficient heating. Fortunately for the National Shows the dates are sufficiently late in the year for room temperatures to be comfortable. The 1984 National at Nottingham should cause no problems in this respect. I have not heard any complaints about the cold on the two previous visits.

To the newer members of the Association I would say that Nottingham's food and accommodation are most adequate, the terrain is level and the central complex is within easy walking distance from all the Halls of Residence. It should be an enjoyable week-end.

From correspondence in the May 1983 Newsletter, it would seem that the 25th anniversary Conference will not actually be until 1985. The NAWB committee should plan an extra-special National but whether they prefer to return to a venue previously visited or take a chance on a first time venue will not be an easy decision. There would seem to be more suitable venues than ever before and it could well be that the Nationals of the future will be even better than the many that I have enjoyed in the past.

Cheers.

Stan Baker.

Having read Stan's letter reminded me of a discussion held some years ago at the South East Regional Group of Judges, at which time amateur and professional standards were being assessed, evaluated, praised, criticised and analysed. There was no eventual agreement and my only personal conclusion, having judged professionally for 6 years at the International Wine and Spirit Competition, is that amateur judges should continue to uphold the honesty and integrity expected by exhibitors and not in any way to lower their sights. (I had better not comment further in print!)

I rummaged through old files in the loft and found this controversial quote:

"Every year the 'National' is held and the judges wade through a sea of fermented fruit juices. Quite a large proportion of these are almost undrinkable, quite a few are furiously fermenting the day after, and many more are topped up and carefully put away for the next show. What an 'Alice in Wonderland' situation it is.

Let us change direction.

Have a commercial class - perhaps, red and white table classes, and a Riesling, or a Burgundy class.

Wine bottles - claret, sauternes or hock, according to class. A specialised label and good straight cork (unlimited supplies of these! Ed.) with a decent foil or plastic capsule..

Entries to be submitted three weeks, or three months even, before the Show, and sorted by the Chief Steward. (Thank goodness I switched jobs in time! Where on earth would I store 4500 bottles?! Ed.)

Judging on the day of the Show to be by commercial standards, set by commercially produced wines from the specific regions.

Initially it would be necessary for the Federations to introduce commercial sections into their Show schedules and gradually they would be adopted by Circles who were interested. The procurement of labels, capsules etc is quite simple these days.

Specialisation, I feel, would come about by those Amateur Winemakers wishing to pit their skills against the commercial producers and could raise the level of Amateur Winemaking, especially in the art of stabilising, storing and presenting the wine"

(Well, there's food for thought - for all you go-ahead Federations, Circles and Stan! Ed.)

An anonymous letter - a reply from the Chairman

Dear Members

At our last N.E.C. meeting, an anonymous letter was read out. From one of our members, I presume. What a sorry state of affairs when a member is afraid to disclose his/her name. Are they ashamed, or just small in stature? The complaint

was that Ken Bilham had publicised some of his T.A.S.T.E.R.S. wine tours.

This is a service to Winemakers which Ken is able to do, obviously after 54 tours enjoys doing it, and details have appeared before in many of our Newsletters with no complaints. To my personal knowledge they are well organised tours, good fun and good value, and have been enjoyed by thousands of winelovers, including several hundreds of our members.

Maurice 'The Chair'

#### Forthcoming Events

The Wine Tour to the Ardennes, Rhine and Mosel, Luxemboug, Trier and Rudesheim is now full with 52 Winelovers.

3rd - 8th October - Champagne and Rhineland. Sea / Coach. 5 Nights. £158.50  
Details: Dave Ellis, Medway 79111

The New Wine Tour to Penedes - now full with 50 Winelovers - but in view of the interest shown already booking for October 1984. Details: TASTERS, 8 Hollybank Close, Hampton, Middlesex or phone 01-979-9725.

March/April 1985 - Wine tour to Australia - 1 week Melbourne, 1 week Adelaide, 1 week Sydney, Visits and Tastings to Australia's best, Clare, Watervale, Barossa Valley, Tshbilk, Coonswarra, Hunter Valley etc. Prices being negotiated.

Details: TASTERS, 8 Hollybank Close, Hampton, Middlesex or phone 01-979-9725 (22 Bookings Already)

Incidentally, only one of our members noticed the deliberate mistake in the last issue and I thought it a most generous gesture on behalf of the winner to request that I share the prize - a Sparkler - with him.

The only trouble was, it didn't last very long - once we'd got it alright!

I see from my Broadbent-orientated notes (naturally, recorded at the time):

Alright, precocious little sparkler, bright and ready a few minutes after opening (the box of matches), a smoky nose with a touch of sulphur, fiery - giving one a feeling of warmth, disappointingly short, and dropping off with an unexpected finish.

Instead of the more prosaic start to life of laying down in a bin - that's where it finished up!

Obviously, just a bin-end!!

The mistake? Oh yes.

Melbourne is roughly the same latitude as JEREZ - not JERSEY!

Above the plaintive cries of 'Oh no, he's at it again' I respectfully call you to order to deliver an important message -

From the Chairman - concerning the National at Nottingham 1984

After a very long meeting, setting up the 1984 Show, it was decided to keep accommodation costs absolutely rock bottom and not penalise non-members by upping the price.

Day tickets have been kept to an absolute minimum too - just enough to cover music and halls, we hope, so we expect large numbers of wine and beer makers to flock to our evening dances and to the Show.

There will be prizes on Friday for Fancy Dress and on Saturday for the best Circle and Federation Emblems. On Saturday afternoon there will be an Open Forum with Committee Members on the Panel. Please come along with ideas and suggestions.

(This could foreshorten 'Any Other Business' at the AGM on Sunday morning. Ed.)

A Sub-Committee, looking into Membership

Peter Aubery, our robust Vice-Chairman, will be chairing a Sub-Committee with our President, Mr Cyril Berry, and friends who are looking into the question of membership. We hope to have some new proposals for the AGM to get the membership re-structured and truly 'National'. The Chairman will be pleased to hear from anyone interested in membership, activities during the Show week-end or any service in which you think your Committee may be of help to the members.

World Wine Fair, Bristol

Having been instrumental in helping to promote the World Wine Fair at a meeting in the famous Cafe Royal circa 1978, some twelve months before the first Fair, I was a little disappointed to find a decline in the number of stands at this years Fair.

Possibly, for the sake of my liver, this could have been a good thing because, whereas during the first four years of the Fair I was on a Stand from dawn to dusk (or so it seemed) for the whole fortnight, this year I went for the day only. Unfortunately I met far too many people I knew who all seemed to regard my official lined glass as a pint pot with Rubino's following Verdelho's and everything else from Amontillado Burjundy and Claret, through clouds of Rainwater and Riojas' to Xeres, Yugoslavs and Wente Brother's Zinfandels (last tasted at their winery in Iilvermore) and, of course - all in alphabetical order! Thank goodness for the long coach ride back to Heathrow which was well organised by Eric and Muriel Clark, apart from a twenty minute delay at take-off, waiting for two defaulters. One incident due to the very hot weather recalled by my old friend Ken Smith, Director of the Fair, was of two members from the Winemakers Vineyard Stand jumping in the adjoining harbour at 2 o'clock in the morning and last seen heading out for the S.S. Great Britain. Surprisingly they were on the Stand the next morning - and, not so surprisingly - stone cold sober!

Souvenir Beer Glasses

Not one reply! May 1983 Newsletter, Page 4.

Competition Corks

400 corks have been ordered to date following the announcement in the last issue, and in case it may have been overlooked by Circles, Federations or, indeed, Winemakers, herewith a repeat:

Unlimited supplies, all cork, flanged, suitable for competitions in 100, 500, 1000, 5000 and 10,000 packets. £6.00 per 100. Large discounts  $\frac{1}{2}$  million and over. Buyer collects (S. London) or carriage extra. Box 103.

Staging

Suitable for Circle and Federation Shows - to be sold as one lot or the storekeeper could be encouraged to sell in small parcels. S.A.E. for details. Offers invited and all considered. Box 102.

Addressograph Machine

Slightly in need of repair, ideal for Circles or Federations. Not of interest to an Antique Dealer (as previously deemed) - one stated it wasn't nearly old enough and in far too good a condition! Offers Box 101.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due on 1st July and, if left unpaid, this could be your last Newsletter - see inside front cover.

Answers emanating from queries in the last Newsletter:

Page 7:

Under the heading A.O.B. - a letter from Mr R. Fisher (Somerset)

Dear Ken,

Congratulations on your 'News and Views'; this is a refreshing improvement in days of austerity: neatly laid out, well presented and easy to read.

Ken, I write concerning the item headed 'A.O.B.' on page 7. I am Ron Fisher and enclose a copy of my letter to Mr Ives (the General Secretary) concerning 'A.O.B.' at the last A.G.M. This was sent as the matter concerned the Executive Committee and .....

(This matter is still being dealt with by the General Secretary and the Chairman. Ed.)

Page 8:

A grouse, (or, perhaps, a brace of grouse!)

Nottingham University have resolved the ruling regarding caravans, caravanettes etc. being used on site by stating this is contrary to University Regulations. I understand there are sites around Nottingham for vans and campers. Obviously, one may use the vehicle as a normal car, if staying in the University.

Page 15:

Distribution of Souvenir Glasses, from Mr & Mrs Peck (Colchester)

Firstly, Mr & Mrs Peck, you will have read of the most generous offer by Sybil Hill on page 1 of this Newsletter. Secondly, referring to the final paragraph in your letter on page 16, there have been no comments whatsoever from the members on this subject.

And now in answer to your query, this comes from the very top - from the Chairman -

'Glasses have been provided mainly as a souvenir for the Judges, two each for judging as they receive no other remuneration at all. All Class Winners receive one glass, also Stewards (the workers.Ed.) who have to set up the Show are presented with one glass at the discretion of the Chief Steward.

The President, Committee members and Civic Dignatories usually receive two each, then, of course, there are the usual breakages and mis-prints (ten).

480 glasses were bought last year - the Committee did have an extra two.

The main reason for not having them for sale is to make them very special for the people who are given them at present.

Why not bring this forward at the Open Forum 1984?

The Committee will follow the majority decision.

I hope this answers your query.

Maurice Matthews.

Page 15:

A query from Frank Scholes re: Calculation of Circle League Points Table

A letter from Roy Butcher - previous Awards Secretary.

Dear Mr Scholes

The Circle League Points Table is a by product in the process of computing the winners of the 'Amateur Winemaker' Shield and Nottingham Trophy (Circle with the highest and second highest points over the 76 classes and sub-classes). The following is a background to the system to explain this table.

On the NAWB entry forms the Exhibitors are requested to enter the name of their 'circle' as well as their own Name, Address and list of classes they wish to enter.

On receipt of the 'Entry Forms' the Entries Secretarys' processing includes the issue of an Exhibitors Number; this number, the related name, address and circle are passed to the Awards Secretary who enters this long list into a computer file, we hope long before the day of the show!!!

On the day of the show all 76 plus classes are brilliantly judged and, for each class, a signed 'Results' sheet listing up to six Exhibitors Numbers arrives in the awards office.

At the computer key board the operator types in the number of the class, the computer responds with either the full name of the class or 'OUTSIDE CLASS NO RANGE try again'. The operator checks the class name with that written on the Result Sheet and if correct enters the list of winning Exhibitor numbers as prompted by computer finally adding the Judge(s) identifying number to end the sequence.

The computer, using the original 'Exhibitor file', decodes the Exhibitors numbers and displays the class again with the winners number, name and wine circle code; the operator is asked to agree the data. On agreement the computer writes into the 'Results file', at the related class number position, the six winning Exhibitors Numbers, First, Second etc. and removes that particular class No. from the 'Awaiting Judges Results for classes' display. It is at this point where a print out of the Class Results is obtained for wall display.

When all results have been entered trophy competition can begin. The programme has been constructed to use a 'look up table' listing all the Class numbers to be covered for each Trophy. In the case of the 'Amateur Winemaker' Shield and Nottingham Trophy classes 1 to 31 and 36 to 50 are listed.

The following description of the computer operation was manually done by the awards team before the arrival of the computer, so I will try to explain it with reference to that manual system. The above computer entry of Class Results was performed in the manual system by adding to the Results Sheets the name and wine circle and typing one plus three copies of the data on to pre-printed sheets of paper that could be cut into six slips, one for each award.

For this particular Trophy operation the computer allocates a pigeon hole for each Wine Circle code number (manual; that box of index cards numbered 10 to 130)

The computer takes the first class in the trophy 'look up table' goes to the Results File, finds the class and notes the Exhibitors No. As this is the First No., the points awarded are 9; goes to the 'Exhibitors File' locates the exhibitors record by the Exhibitors No. and notes the related Wine Circle No., returns to the pigeon hole of that Wine Circle and add 9 points to any total that resides in that pigeon hole. (manual; the distribution of the yellow copy of the award slip and its collation behind the appropriate index card.)

The process continues for all the winners in the class, then gets the next class etc. for all the listed classes against that Trophy.

Each Wine Circle pigeon hole now contains the total number of points won by all the 'recorded' members of that circle. (manual; a collated mass of yellow slips of paper, over 300).

To find the highest and second highest points the computer sorts the pigeon holes into a descending order of the totalled contents. (manually; selection by review)

Now, at last, the Circle League Points Table is a print of the sorted pigeon holes decoded to show the descending order; the value of the points in the pigeon holes; names of the Wine Circles with those points and finally in brackets the code or pigeon hole number for that wine circle.

In the manual system this particular Trophy computation was always the last to be completed and at best took two people at least four hours (8 person hours). The computer does this bit in five minutes while the operator has liquid lunch.

I hope this explanation has not further confused the issue.

Yours sincerely

Roy Butcher

(I don't suppose you appreciated, Frank, what a lot of work goes on behind the scenes at a 'National'. I've read through the 'proofs' twice - and am still confused! Ed.)

A further letter from Frank Scholes (Wakefield)

Dear Ken

Received my copy of News and Views, which I think is a vast improvement. I also agree with your remarks on clearing the room after judging and at previous 'Nationals'. This has been ridiculous.

My wife and I cannot find words to express our appreciation of the Committee's kind gesture to us ( a reference to his Honorary Membership for Long and Meritorious Service to the Association. Ed.)

Having spent a large number of years in public employment and a longer number of years in voluntary organisations in service to the public, one learns a lot about human nature, and we are still involved with voluntary bodies, so it is very hard to give up.

I would also add that working people are very hard task-masters and they expect more from people employed and volunteers than any private employer. But it is quite an education, and one learns tact, good temper and understanding.

There was a lot of criticism in the last Newsletter, and there are also some good suggestions, but it is surprising how these come in only when things do not go as planned. The 'National' has not been held at Southampton before and it is only natural that one would have to find their way about.

We arrived at Southampton on Thursday afternoon and took a taxi from the station which took us right to the reception door, from where we were directed to our block. We did a little exploring; after unpacking, found the Television Room, also a Pools Room, and the few students who were there were very obliging. Our only complaint was the weather - had it been better, we would have walked to the Students Union more than we did.

As regards the criticism in a letter about Universities, I find they are first class accommodation and meals, and I did not see anything 'tatty' about Southampton. The price is also reasonable, and our Show and Conference should be out of season unless these critics wish to pay very highly, which would nearly kill the 'National' off!

I think the National Committee has had invitations to go to both Nottingham (which we know), also Scarborough, and I take it that the invitations have come from the Local Authorities, so I think its only common courtesy to invite the Civic Head to present the Awards.

I think I had better end this letter before I spoil my manners to comment on the remark (on page 13) about the 'third-rate jumble sale'.

Wishing you all the best and good luck in the 'Hot Seat'.

Yours sincerely

Frank Scholes

(Many thanks, Frank, for your typed letter. I would just point out that the Committee did not receive an invitation from the Local Authority at Nottingham - we asked the University to have us!

I am sure your final comments would have been quite mild compared with those expressed at the last Committee meeting where this calumny was looked upon most unfavourably, not least by our industrious Fund Raiser.

For the benefit of new members, Frank is now in his 81st year. Ed.)

A late note from a NON-MEMBER, Mr Arthur Hooper (Harpenden)

Dear Kenneth (when my Mother used this term, I knew I was in trouble! Ed.)

I both read and enjoyed your first edition of the Newsletter. Since succeeding to the dizzy elevation within the 'higher hierarchy' (He's 'punnier' than me! Ed.) I borrowed a copy from a very good friend of mine, who happened to be a member of your Association, following an extremely good talk and slide show by him of your South African Wine Tour and Safari.

I am not yet a member and simply must do something about it.

(You simply must - just pay your money and I shall look forward to seeing you at Nottingham, if not before. Message to your 'good friend' - please lend him this Newsletter. Ed.)

And a final message from our Chairman

Dear Friends

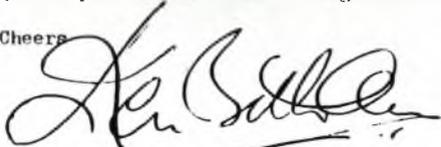
I believe our News and Views Editor is very capable and willing and wishes to continue with the excellent start he has made. Please give him your full support

and I am sure he will respond with a magazine which you would like published every month instead of four times a year.

Haurice 'The Choir'

(And a predictable final message from me. NO CHANCE! Ed.)

Cheers

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Williams', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

KEN WILLIAMS  
Editor