

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WINE AND BEER MAKERS
(Amateur)**

NEWS AND VIEWS

JUNE 1987



President: Mr. P. Awbery

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N A W B (A)

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WINE AND BEERMAKERS (AMATEUR)

NEWS AND VIEWS

JUNE 1987

EDITORIAL

LLANDUDNO was a great success! Not without its hitches - what major show ever is? - but overall our first visit to Wales was a really worthwhile event to attend, and one that I am sure will be repeated at some future date. The weather was remarkably good to us, the people kindly and helpful, and the hospitality unstinted. Add to that the beauty of the North Wales countryside and coast, and one can only feel sympathy for those who were unable to attend. Those who stayed away from choice made the wrong decision. More about Llandudno in later pages.

The AGM brought one main decision: from 1988 the existing all-cork stopper used for show-bottle entries will be replaced by the white-plastic topped stopper that has a cork body. This type of stopper has been adopted by several Federations and found satisfactory. Perhaps now competitors will cease to complain that good quality corks are not available, a constant cry one hears despite the fact that the National Guild of Judges announced

years ago that poor quality stoppers were a fact of life, and acceptable if clean and wholesome, and sufficient to keep the wine in the bottle !

Jim Chettle's resignation from the Executive Committee took effect from the AGM, though doubtless his skill and experience gained from many years on the National Committee will still be there for the Committee to draw on if necessary. We are all sorry to see him leave; for years he has combined Membership Secretary with Awards Secretary, and besides printing out sheaves of address labels for each issue of 'News & Views' from the membership records meticulously maintained on the Association's computer, he has carried out the complex listings to ensure at the National Show that all the points awarded for the great range of show classes are correctly allocated, and carried out all their permutations to decide who should receive each of the many trophies. A complex and responsible job, and always well done - thanks from us all, Jim.

And an important piece of news to end with. At the short Executive Committee meeting held after the AGM - no rest for the wicked - our Chairman for 1987/88 was chosen: Norman Chiverton from Woolscott, near Rugby. Norman too has worked long and hard for NAWB, and his dedication and enthusiasm should ensure another good year for the Association. Congratulations, Norman.



Roy Ekins, Editor

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR NEW CHAIRMAN

As I take up the reins of an office I never imagined I would attain, I would like to place on record my thanks to our outgoing Chairman, Lenn Drysdale.

Lenn has been personally responsible for the rescue of our Association from a potentially disastrous situation, three years ago, and guiding it to a time of peace, goodwill, harmony and financial security, by his leadership, tact and dedication, during which he was suffering his own personal private grief.

NAVB should be eternally grateful and I intend to continue my term of office in the same way.

Thank you.

Norman W Chiverton

And for the benefit of those who don't know our new Chairman well, here's his own 'Press Release' to put you in the picture:-

A POTTED HISTORY OF THE NAVB CAREER OF CHAIRMAN NORM!

1971 - Hull - Entered, failed dismally.

1972 - Eastbourne - Entered, failed again. (tried quite hard, though).

Got collared by Elvin Plant to type stencils on Saturday, wished I couldn't type!

1973 - Harrogate - Entered, failed again. (this gets monotonous!)

- 1974 - Margate - Entered, GOT TWO AWARDS! (the standard of judging was clearly better)
- 1975 - Nottingham - After the Lord Mayor's Show...failed.
- 1976 - Birmingham - AGM only. One of the gallant few!
- 1977 - Scarborough - Entered, got a few awards. What a lovely venue.
- 1978 - Nottingham - Entered, a few minor awards again. Elected to NAWB Committee, made Supplies Officer. (I wonder why? Could it be because I'm a wholesale stationer?)
- 1979 - Brighton - had to work for a change! Now knew about the behind-the-scenes action.
- 1980 - Blackpool - Now Entries Sec. Also a Guild Judge. Won the Loftus cup. (I believe this is the only occasion a 2nd place has won a cup..... Unless you know otherwise....)
- 1981 - Exeter - Still Entries Sec, but learning the hard way.
- 1982 - Scarborough again. Entries Sec. Won a pot. This venue is now a permanent one.
- 1983 - Southampton - STILL Entries Sec. but enjoying life.
- 1984 - Nottingham - Entries Sec. Is this our last time at Nottingham ?
- 1985 - Eastbourne - Chairman Lenn. Still Entries Sec! Won another pot!
- 1986 - Scarborough - Convenor of Judges! Didn't enter. Thoroughly enjoyed myself.
- 1987 - Llandudno - Convenor again. Enjoying this lovely venue, slightly small halls! The Committee, in their wisdom (or otherwise) decide on me for Chairman.

No doubt this is a 'middle-of-the-road' career, but thanks for everything.

Norman

CORRESPONDENCE

And this is where your Editor expects to be torn between letters from geniuses, letters from novices, humorous letters, sad letters, complaints and criticism, brickbats and bouquets - every type of letter imaginable! With well over seven hundred members one can anticipate floods of correspondence from people with new ideas for making NAWB bigger and/or better, change and comment; long letters, short letters, letters set afloat in bottles - ALL kinds of letters, and in quantity.

Oh, well, my thanks to the three or four people who did write! And so to start with, a snippet from a letter from a lady in Hailsham who has let her membership lapse, and whose identity I shall conceal :-

"Unfortunately I am unable to travel the country to get to the Nationals, for one thing I cannot afford it, and for another the two times I did encounter the Nationals (in Eastbourne) particularly the last one in 1985, as much as I found it an interesting experience, being on my own I felt very much alone. Nobody invited me to join their table, although those from areas I had lived in previously did realise I was alone. If I had a companion & co-driver I would very much like to continue."

Well, that doesn't sound like the sort of camaraderie one expects from National members, though it is easy to see how it can happen. If there is anyone within striking distance of Hailsham who would like a friend to go to shows with, or a nearby Circle with kind hearts in it, then I will gladly send any letters on to our correspondent.

Incidentally, this lady did take me to task as Editor for continuing to send her copies of 'News & Views' despite her membership fees remaining unpaid, and quoted the Constitution to prove me wrong! However, I am not

penitent; if the rules were followed implicitly, we would probably lose about two-thirds of our membership annually; in any case, I take the view that a lapsed member who receives News & Views is much more likely to complete the application form I print at the back and renew membership, than a person who has no further contact with the National. It was for this reason that I had an extra hundred copies printed of the March edition; our membership now is higher than it has been for several years, and the numbers that came to Llandudno were almost an embarrassment. So until the Executive cease to agree with me, I shall continue to cast bread on the waters, if I think it is in the best interests of the Association.

Now, if you are a Beatles fan, perhaps you can give Anne Parrack a little assistance. She wrote saying :-

"After my judging stint at the National, I had clean forgotten about the Judges' complimentary glasses - my steward had done all his work and gone before someone produced the glasses for me, and I never managed to spot him again all weekend to give him one of them.

Can you check your records and let me have his address, so I can send him a glass ? He is called John Lennon, and I think he said he was from Devon. Hope you can oblige,

Yours,

Anne Parrack

Now there's a kindly thought for you!

Well, Anne, we have checked as far as we can, and this famous man (or his namesake) doesn't seem to appear in our records. If the gentleman who acted as Anne's Steward at Llandudno during the judging session would like to contact me, I will see that she receives his correct name and address.

And don't worry, Anne, it gets to us all in due course....it's the $\text{CH}_3\text{CH}_2\text{OH}$!

The next letter is an edited copy of one that was sent to our Show Manager, Doug. Ives:-

Dear Doug,

NAVB National Llandudno 1987

I am writing to congratulate you, as Show Manager, and the NAVB Committee, on the organisation and competence which was displayed in the running of the Show.

On a more personal note, I would like to thank you for sorting out the problems of seating on the Friday evening. Everyone of our members thoroughly supported your comments on the matter at the AGM. Your handling of the situation showed great determination and thought. Many thanks once again.

A Procter

Chairman, Phoenix Wine Circle

Another letter comes from Mrs. J Vickery of Liphook Wine Circle on basically the same subject, Llandudno:-

"Dear Editor,

My husband and I have just come back from Llandudno, and looking back over a full weekend, we would like to give you our general impression of the National. Good points first:- There seemed to be more bottles than normal - were there? The Fancy Dress Show by members of various Wine Clubs was splendid, what a lot of work and imagination to be sure! The Morris Dancers were energetic and colourful - All this on a Friday, as you know. On Saturday the show - the Wine Tasting and Talk - the food - the dance - the choir - Jolly nice, the whole kit and caboodle. The folk so friendly, though some had travelled a long way through hard weather and were just happy to be there. But my dear officials of NAVB, wasn't Friday night a bit

of a misery? Folks hunting chairs and tables, the late start of the music, and such a small hall for such a lot of people and activity? What a disservice to NAWB! - NAWB we need you, you need us, so please can we have a hall to fit the people, or even the amount of people to fit the hall. Can someone not measure the space needed for a thousand or whatever the numbers are, people seated, leaving enough room to dance fairly comfortably. I'll bet there are some clever Wine Circle members who can work out the answer to that bit of arithmetic and will gladly send it to the NAWB Committee. Will it be better next year?

Happy Winemaking

J Vickery (Mrs.)

PS We all know how very hard the Committee works, and it's a shame it should be negated through lack of Hall space."

To start with, thanks from the EC for the praise for the parts that pleased; Friday night was a bit like the Curate' egg - good in parts! For the rest, what can one say, except to agree that Friday night was overcrowded and a little chaotic to start with, and to assure members that next year will be better. Of course the EC members accept responsibility in the final analysis, because we are elected by the members to run NAWB, and give as good a service as is possible, whether judged by amateur or professional standards. But in return, don't you think members should at least attend the AGM wherever possible to voice their views and discover why these mishaps have occurred? Friday night's events were thoroughly thrashed out at the AGM, and as you see by Alan Procter's letter above, satisfactorily explained. And Alan's Circle was one that was badly affected by Friday's events, to the extent of returning to their hotel for the

evening. Look out for the Minutes of the AGM, which will be in 'News & Views' next Spring! Another letter about Llandudno from Bob Marsdon :-
 Dear Roy - Yet another grand 'National' has come and gone, and what a splendid weekend it was. Congratulations to the Committee for choosing Llandudno for this year's Conference, a lovely resort, where I hope the 'National' will return in the future. There were a few complaints about the lack of space in both the dance hall and around the show benches. As this was due to the higher numbers attending and also exhibiting this year, we should be pleased with these signs that NAWB is flourishing.

One sad moment for me was the acceptance at the AGM of white-topped corks for future shows. Along with the suggestion of tinted and non-punted bottles, it does seem our pride in presentation is on the decrease. As a Federation Competition Secretary for some years, I have always been deeply concerned in how a show looks, particularly to the general public who pass through. Perhaps it doesn't matter so much at the NAWB Show, where most of us are wine or beer makers already, but at the Middlesex Show where thousands of non-winemakers pass through our marquee, it is imperative that we present our products at their best, so that we might entice more people into our hobby, and into our clubs. In opposing the Motion (at the AGM -Ed) I likened the appearance of white-topped wine bottles on a show bench, to a sauce counter at Sainsbury's. Umbrage was apparently taken at this comparison, but no insult of Sainsbury's sauce counter was intended. It is just that it is from my local Sainsbury's that I get my sauce, and I do have a lot of sauce!

Thanking the Committee for their hard work in making this year's Conference as good as its previous Shows, I am

Yours fraternally in winemaking,

Bob Marsdon

No umbrage was taken by me on behalf of Sainsbury's, Bob, in fact I am sure they will be delighted to learn of the extra publicity Sainsbury's have gained - five mentions in this short passage alone.

With regard to the bottle stoppers, aren't you perhaps giving undue emphasis to the old style stoppers' appearance ? I think you will find that you will soon become accustomed to the new-look stoppers, and the uniformity and neat finish to the rows of show bottles will still be there, but just a little different. And speaking as an individual, I do think that after thirty years or so of organised winemaking and brewing, we might have got to the point where perhaps too much emphasis can be laid on presentation, and not enough on the actual wine itself? The current marking sheet advocated by the National Guild of Judges, which is accepted by the National Association, only allocates 2 points to Presentation, out of a total of 50 points that could be granted. If the bottles remain anonymous, are to a standard, and are neat, clean, effective and attractive, then that basically is all that is required. I don't think you will find the uniformity of the new look all that earth-shattering, Bob.

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VINE APPRECIATION TRIP - ALSACE LORRAINE

One of our members, Mrs Christine Lear of the Shropshire Wine Appreciation Society, has sent me details of a wine tasting trip to the Alsace Lorraine area. Any NAWB members interested should contact her at 14 Meole Rise, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury SY3 9JF, or telephone 0743 4012. From the description this appears to be a first-rate holiday run by a non-profit-making group, and seems to be excellent value for money. The coach will

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leave Shrewsbury early on Saturday October 24th, and arrive back from 10 pm onwards on Saturday October 31st. Tips etc are included, as are evening dinner, bed and breakfast each day, staying at a 3-star hotel. The only (optional) extra appears to be insurance, but this can be arranged for £8.50 per person. The overall cost of the holiday is £230 per person. Vacancies are limited in number, so if you are interested, waste no time in contacting Christine - there's less than a dozen seats left!.

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NAWB NATIONAL LLANDUDNO APRIL 1987 - CIRCLE LEAGUE POINTS TABLE

1/ 503 points gained by Phoenix	17/ 26 points St Albans
2/ 221 points - Tyneside Nationals	18/ 23 " West Kent
3/ 202 " Tynemouth	Luton
4/ 178 " Ace of Clubs	Golden
5/ 177 " Old Bexley	19/ 22 " Wakefield
6/ 142 " Nottingham	20/ 21 " Beverley
7/ 97 " Bedford Trucks	21/ 20 " Vale of Clwyd
8/ 78 " Plymouth	22/ 18 " Rugby
9/ 75 " Leyton	23/ 16 " Atherton
10/ 53 " Hutton	Edenbridge
11/ 45 " British Airways	24/ 15 " Norton
12/ 37 " Bognor	Northwood
13/ 32 " Invicta (Kent)	25/ 14 " Preston
14/ 29 " Huddersfield	26/ 13 " H.E.L.A.
15/ 28 " Liphook	Exeter
16/ 27 " Kendal	Wetherby



1962 - 1987



WEMBLEY GUILD OF WINEMAKERS
 ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR SILVER JUBILEE
 SEND BEST WISHES TO
 ALL GUILDS AND FELLOW WINEMAKERS.

POINTS TABLE (cont)

27/	11	points	Springhead, Jubilee, Hall Green
28/	10	"	Derwent Valley, Richmond.
29/	9	"	Buckhurst Hill, Scraftoft, Baildon, Normanton.
30/	7	"	New Forest, Bradford, South Devon ABS, York & District, Harpenden, Spen, Hopkinsons'
31/	6	"	Wembley, Bolton.
32/	5	"	Taunton Deane, Epsom Downs, Burbage, Formby, Hull.
33/	4	"	Mirfield, Holme Valley, Hucknall
34/	3	"	North Sefton, Sittingbourne, Case Tractors, Leicester.
35/	2	"	Leamington, Shelf, Shooter's Hill, Aberdare.
36/	1	"	Fareham, Poole & District, Cleveland, E D A W S, Grandborough, Roseberry, Llandudno

CHETTLE'S CHATTER

A FOND FAREWELL

I have now said "Goodbye" to a good friend of some six year's standing. Amidst much ceremony, weeping and wailing, the NAWB computer left my house to take up residence in its new home in Bromley.

A SPECIAL PLEA

The NAWB year 1987/88 has been especially designated the "Be Good To Dave Pulley" year. Dave has taken over Membership Sec., along with the Entries job, so don't delay in paying your subs. Dave won't want to be dealing with Membership in the New Year, when all his efforts will be wanted on the Entries side of his job.

SUBS.

NOW - Take a break from reading this Newsletter - Fill out your renewal form - Make out a cheque - Put both in an envelope and send them to Dave. Don't forget to enclose a stamped addressed envelope. Also, don't forget the rule book says subs, should be in by the end of July.

AWARDS

Mike Hayter is taking over the Awards Secretary's job. Mike's profession is in computers, so you should get the show results out just as quickly. As a matter of interest, we beat all records at Llandudno. Well done, the judges!

(And what about a cheer for the then Awards Sec. Jim Chettle ? - Editor)

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Thanks to all those people who have written to me over the years; I'll miss the daily 'plop' of envelopes through the door. However, I might now be able to pay more attention to my winemaking.

See you all at Brighton.....JIM CHETTLE

NEWS AND VIEWS - A SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

You will have noticed that I have with pride commented on the steady growth in the National's membership, due largely to the efforts of your Committee members. This has been over a period when there is actually a depression in both the homebrew trade and the hobby, so the improved recruitment is additionally pleasing.

This drop-off in the trade has had quite startling results. Because there has been a sharp reduction in the amount of money spent on advertising, the hobby magazines have been severely affected; they rely on advertising revenue to keep the publications on sale at a price buyers are willing to pay. Without advertising, magazines would be impossibly expensive.

You may have noticed that the free magazine, 'Practical Winemaking and Brewing' has not been published since the Jan/Feb issue. Now I can advise you, with great regret, that the 'Amateur Winemaker and Brewer' suspended publication after the June issue, and the last issue of the trade magazine, 'HomeBrew Supplier' has also been distributed. 'Homebrew Today', the free newspaper-style publication by Argus, is still being published, but that relies wholly on advertising sales to continue, and its future must be in jeopardy. It is also a lively paper designed to attract people into the hobby, and so not primarily aimed at the majority of committed winemakers and brewers who are NAWB members.

That leaves just Prof. Gerry Fowle's excellent quarterly, 'Wine for All Seasons', which is a specialised magazine containing advanced material for serious winemakers.

The hobby will therefore be without any country-wide popular publication other than 'News & Views', at least for the time being, and as Editor I feel that we have a special responsibility to the hobby to act as a central

clearing house for news, new ingredients and techniques, reminiscences and amusing anecdotes, show reports, and all the other fascinating facets of our craft.

This is obviously a matter to be deeply considered by your Committee, but I would appeal to all our members, brewers and winemakers, to think about this subject, and let me have your thoughts on the best course of action for 'News & Views' to follow. Should we plod on as before? Expand and charge for each issue? Issue it free to members, and sell copies to non-members through Circles and Federations? Income from 'News & Views' might mean we could pay a small - very small! - token fee to contributors, and include more on wine and beer making as well as NAWB news and comment. I really would like to know your views on this, and hope to receive great stacks of letters before our next Committee meeting on June 28th!

It is also well worth remembering that if the AW&B and other magazines are no longer available, this is the ideal time to recruit more members, who will want to keep in touch with what's going on in the hobby. Perhaps, for example, we could introduce a subscription membership, for people who would not be going to that year's National Conference & Show but would like 'News & Views' as a magazine just the same. This could help us retain the members who often drop out when the Show isn't in their own area.

That's just one of the ideas that has popped up from the fermenting pot that sits on my shoulders; I am sure you have many more ingenious schemes and suggestions, perhaps more practicable than mine. Maybe you have a bright idea on how to contact the 'outsiders' to let them know what they are missing, or an idea for changing the format of 'News & Views'; whatever your brainstorm produces, let's hear about it. A few may get published, but I won't publish it in your name if you don't want me to. Promise!

HOME COMPUTER SOFTWARE

Seen at the Wales & West Show was a demonstration, on three different models of home computer, by Ian McFarlane of his VINSOFT automatic recipe formulator. This ingenious program contains essential data for some 90 commonly-used ingredients. It includes formulæ for calculating alcohol yields, etc., based on the latest research. Imperial - Metric conversions are also built in.

The winemaker first decides what style of wine he wishes to make from a choice of 16 standard commercial equivalents, with the option to modify each of these 16 specifications, i.e. sweetness, acidity, and strength. Choosing from the 90 ingredients stored in the program, a recipe can then be created. At any stage the computer will tell you how far away the recipe is from the chosen style, and if requested, will automatically change the recipe to get the balance right. If your computer has a printer, then a hard copy (print-out) can be run off.

The program is currently available for the BBC range, and the Amstrad CPC and PCW computers. It is also being modified for the Commodore, Amstrad PCs, and other IBM PC compatibles. Further details from : Ian McFarlane, The Cayo, Shirenewton, Gwent, NP6 6RL (Tel. 02917 550)

BOTTLE BRITE

Also seen at that show was a neat little gadget for cleaning bottles. This is the AVRO 'Bottle Brite', over 15 inches (almost 40 cm) long, a plastic rod tipped with a sponge and green scouring pad to get to those awkward corners where the stains lurk - especially in show bottles and hydrometer jars! Imagine a cylinder punched out of a kitchen scouring pad, the ones with that fine green stuff on the underside, and mounted with a stick that

goes from top to bottom. You've got it! Neat, simple, effective, and only 75p from your local shop.

VENUES FOR THE NATIONAL

Once again, for the benefit of new members, the fixed dates for future shows are as follows:-

1988 ; March 25/27 at BRIGHTON

1989 : Not yet decided

1990 : April 6/8 at SCARBOROUGH

As you can see, we have a great gaping void for the year after next - it's getting horribly close for planning purposes, and despite the magic wand that EC members are supposed to carry, a lot of work has to go into shows as big as ours a long time ahead. As an example, weeks before you read this, the Schedule and Programme for Brighton will be approaching its final stages of preparation by the Schedule Sub-Committee, ready for approval by the main Executive Committee.

So there is some concern over the lack of a suitable site for 1989. We have asked members to assist, from their local knowledge, bearing in mind the need under present policy to visit different parts of Britain to relieve the load on the local Liaison Officer and his Circle(s) and to bring the Show and AGM within comfortable travelling distance for all our members in turn.

Following our past appeals, Stan Baker has been quick to explore the possibilities of London, a favoured site in the eyes of Lenn Drysdale, our past Chairman; Lenn thought it would be a sign of the national standing of NAWB to hold the weekend in London if it were feasible. Since then, Stan has done some research, and I print his letter in full below. (Well, almost in

full...) It will be interesting to receive your reactions to this proposed venue.

LONDON...POTENTIAL VENUE WITH A DIFFERENCE

During the 29 years of its existence NAWB has staged its annual Conferences and Shows at numerous venues throughout England, and over the years NAWB enthusiasts have travelled as far North as Scarborough, as far East as Margate, and as far West as Torquay. This year NAWB members have even ventured into a foreign country - Wales. (Not referred to the Race Relations Board! Ed.)

Some venues such as Brighton and Scarborough have become firm favourites, and NAWB has already planned to revisit these venues during the next three years. At the moment no plans have been made as to where to stage NAWB in 1989, and London, which has been in the back of some NAWB members' minds for several years, is being considered.

All of the NAWB Conferences have previously been staged in relatively small towns, and the thought of staging the 1989 NAWB weekend in London may not appeal to some members. A degree of apprehension must be present in the minds of the 55 enthusiasts who attended the AGM in Birmingham in the year that the show was cancelled. (Bognor 1975 - Ed.) Most people had difficulty in finding their way around Birmingham's then newly-installed one-way traffic system. London's traffic flow system has long been established, and weekend traffic in central London is much easier than during the rush hours of the five working days.

There are several Universities in London to choose from, but the City University in Northampton Square, just off the Goswell Rd in EC1 seems to

be around the right size that would suit the average attendance at the **NAVB** weekends.

To my mind the most important factors in assessing the suitability of a venue is that there should be sufficient room for assessing the bottles, sufficient space for the social events, adequate accommodation at not too great a distance, adequate parking in the vicinity, and that the route between the Conference Centre and the accommodation areas should be on reasonably level ground. In nearly all these factors the City University in London fulfils the needs of the majority of **NAVB** members.

The City University comprises several buildings, but the main complex is sited in tree-lined Northampton Sq., about 1½ miles north of St. Paul's Cathedral, so access to the City of London and the West End is comparatively easy.

When I enquired about conference facilities, I was informed that during the student recess of March 26 to April 20 1989 that two large accommodation halls would be available to **NAVB**: Finsbury Hall (7 minutes walk on level ground) with 320 rooms, and Northampton Hall (15. min.) with 490 rooms. Each room is a single study bedroom, with its own washbasin; bathrooms in both Halls have recently been refurbished. Both Halls have TV rooms, lounges, kitchens and laundry rooms. Adequate coach and car parking space is available.

Currently the cost of bed and breakfast is £12 per person per night, on a block booking basis. Lunch would be between £3 and £5 dependent on the courses chosen, and the evening meal would be £4. All prices relate to block bookings. If there were insufficient lunch bookings at one Hall, they could probably be supplied in the other Hall. The cuisine looks very

attractive in the colour brochure and meals should be of good standard. Drinking one's own wine at table would be permitted.

NAWB members who would prefer a different kind of accommodation would be advised to contact the Tourist Information Offices, of which there are several in Central London. In my opinion a block booking by hundreds of NAWB members could make the NAWB City University weekend a relatively inexpensive event.

The main Hall is the largest room in the City University and comprises some 5000 sq. feet. The Conference Officers estimate that with adequate tables the seating capacity would be about 450 people. Unfortunately for dance enthusiasts, and in my opinion this is the minority of NAWB members, dancing is not permitted on the main Hall floor. There is a large stage, so a small band could be hired to, provide background music and a cabaret act or two to make the evening social a lively event. The alternative use of the Main Hall would be to stage the exhibits. (This could be worse than dancing! - Ed.)

The next largest room is the New Hall, some 3600 sq. feet. To my mind this would be most suitable for bottle entry and assessment of wines and beers, but it would seem that, being open space, some means of ensuring security would be necessary.

The exhibition space of the New Hall is linked to the Students Union area by a series of steps (i.e. a mezzanine floor). This means that on the Saturday night that members might sit around refectory type tables in the new Hall and walk through to the dance in the Students Union area, to dance the light fantastic or view the Fancy Dress parade. The Conference Officer suggests it might be advisable to contact Islington Council for the names

of suitable bands or cabaret acts. Perhaps NAWB members near London may have their own ideas?

Elderly NAWB members are advised that there are a few steps up into the Main Building; Finsbury Hall is 7 floors high, and Northampton 17 floors high, but both are served with multiple lifts, and are relatively near to bus routes. Underground Stations which offer a better regular service from early until late are not a great walking distance away, on level ground. What does London offer that other NAWB venues cannot provide? Firstly, in terms of general entertainment, a wider range than any previous NAWB venue. In terms of a 'cultural' wine or beer weekend it offers a wider range of wine cellars and public houses than anywhere else in the country.

I cannot recall any previous NAWB venue having a genuine working wine cellar, but London has several. It is the free floor space between hundreds of cases of wine, necessary to permit their rapid removal that provides the tasting area, be it in the morning, afternoon, or evening. As well as giving the wine buffs the opportunity of tasting a bottle before they buy, it is also a public relations exercise. Usually about eight wines are sampled, and spittoons are provided. Most cellars specialise in certain wine regions, so it would be advisable to shop around, and also to book well in advance. The cellars vary in size, and can accommodate from 25 to 100 people. (Examples provided, to be published later if appropriate - Ed.) London is also a Mecca for beer buffs. Samuel Smith, the Yorkshire brewers, recently bought the chain of Heneky Inns in central London, and although the inns have been expensively refurbished, they still retain their 'Olde Worlde' atmosphere. Several pubs are free houses, so brewers from the North of England may welcome the opportunity of sampling some excellent real ales made in the South.

Travelling: following the completion of the orbital M25, if entry to central London is left until late Friday afternoon, then progress should be rapid as most traffic is then leaving the city. All London rail termini are but a short taxi ride from the City University.

CAR PARKING SPACE IN CENTRAL London is somewhat limited, but after 3 pm on Fridays there are 35 free parking spaces at the main University, and 20 at each of the Halls of Residence. The area around the main University and Halls of Residence is not a business area, and after 5 pm on Fridays and after 1 pm on Saturdays car parking on meter spaces is free. On Saturday morning the meter system is in operation, but there are several National Car Parks in the vicinity. Members not involved in judging or stewarding on the Saturday morning may find it worthwhile to use their cars and visit the sights of London.

Whether the City University can accept a wine and beer drinking Association for the 1989 weekend still awaits a decision from Islington Council; they have yet to renew the University's 'drinking on the premises' licence. By the time that this letter has been published and NAWB readers' comments received, the decision should have been made. Hopefully it will have been made in our favour: if not, then we will need to start looking elsewhere.

Stan Baker, Chatham

Now, dear Readers, there's a block-buster of a letter for you, but it does indicate the amount of detail that must be considered before we can blithely say " Oh yes, let's go to Little Upper Wether Wallop, I rather fancy a weekend there." Do you like the idea of a naughty weekend in the Capital? With perhaps an uplifting trip to St. Paul's, or a visit to Petticoat Lane or the Covent Garden market stalls to spend a pound or two

on a souvenir of your visit to the Big City? It would be a National with a difference; perhaps a little less on the dancing and social evening activities, but an opportunity to go out on the Town for a change. The decision has soon to be made, so let's have your views - not necessarily for publication, but for the guidance of your Committee, who, bless'em, will probably be found to be at fault regardless of what they decide!

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LLANDUDNO 1987

Though many references to Llandudno and the 1987 Conference, Show, and AGM have been made already, there must be members unable to attend who are wondering just how the weekend went. Well, firstly, for early April, the weather was unusually kind, and except for an occasional fresh breeze (probably a Russian hurricane for some of our southern brethren) the sun shone, the skies stayed (almost) dry, and the weather generally was quite clement; I never used a topcoat or mac. And to look out of my hotel window at 6.30 am and see the sea creeping in, lapping gently at the golden sands, was incredible though true. Being a keep-fit fanatic, I took my cup of tea and Anadin back to bed instead of standing around providing a spectacle for the early joggers on the Promenade.

Friday started with my breakfast being interrupted by the announcement that I was now the proud grandfather (Gosh, that sounds old!) of my first grandson, a match for my other daughter's daughter. The day ended with (nearly) a small civil war due to the incapability of the civic authorities of accepting that Doug. Ives as Show Manager knew what he was talking about. This was aggravated by the fact that since we first decided in 1985

to go to Llandudno, the average attendance had risen from 500 to 750, and the entries from 3600 to 4500 approx. Despite the problems that such growth brings, most of which can be sorted out with a little goodwill and tolerance towards fellow members, it is delightful to see NAWB going from strength to strength. The major part of the evening was most enjoyable, especially for those present for the Fancy Dress and for the Welsh Morris Dancers (there's novel for you, bach!).

Saturday brought the usual mixture of stewarding or judging, or shop-window examination for those free to idle their time away, Judges at the Bar, and a Sainsbury's talk and tasting by your Editor, reminiscent of the parable of the loaves and fishes! Where do all these winemakers and brewers come from? Thank goodness it wasn't a wet day! And in the evening, we were the guests of the Mayor of Aberconwy, Cllr. Mrs. E.M. Pattinson O.B.E., a lady of great presence and good humour, who at once made us all feel quite at home. As well as the dance, we were entertained by a Welsh Choir and a delightful lady soloist singer.

Sunday brought the AGM - always worth attending, the one time of the year when members can - and do - stand up and say what they think, outrageous or plain common sense. It also gives the Executive chance to explain what went wrong and why, and what the Association's plans and policies are for the future. A good occasion for clearing the throat and clearing the air!

This was followed by the award of the trophies, again by the Mayor, and the weekend suddenly came to an end. I won't exaggerate by saying there wasn't a dry eye in the place; I'm sure there were two or three among the 750 who came to Llandudno who were ready for their own fireside, if only to recover, dry out, or even refill their internal reservoirs. Your noble

Committee members, of course, went back to work, with another meeting on Sunday afternoon, before escaping to their home grounds.

A good weekend, notable for, amongst other things, the first official contact between NAWB and the Scottish Association. We were honoured by a visit from Ian McNeill, their Chairman, and Marie Balfour, Hon. Secretary, and their spouses, and we hope that this is the first step towards a closer co-operation between the two bodies of Winemakers and Brewers. Though we haven't yet got to the stage of suggesting NAWB 1991 should be at Edinburgh....though you just never know. With regard to the National returning some year to Llandudno, we have learned that new buildings are to be erected, on the land adjoining the Aberconwy Centre that is currently used for car parking and a little children's playground. Perhaps then there will be ample room for our expanding membership.

All sorts of things do happen at the National, of course, apart from liver degeneration, and I was highly amused at breakfast one morning to see an eminent member of the NAWB Committee accosted by a lady under the impression that he was the driver of the coach for her holiday! Such is fame. And the story of the steward who had tasted so many vermouths that when he found a glass that was totally lacking in nose, flavour and character generally, it was a while before he realised he had picked up his water glass by mistake.

These are the incidents that make the National entertaining, and home-brewers being what they are, will continue to do so in future years. Everyone will have their own little stories - do write in with them - and these human touches are what makes the National so very worthwhile.

Roll on Brighton 1988; make sure you are there, it will be too good to miss! And a quotation from Pollok, for those who might have been tempted to overdo it:-

.....On his weary couch
 Fat Luxury, sick of the night's debauch,
 Lay groaning, fretful at the obtrusive beam
 That through his lattice peeped derisively.

Our literary critic, 'Connoisseur', comments as follows:-

This is an interesting extract from a little-known work, and it is instructive to compare it with its modern equivalent, by Roy Alliver:-

There was a young man at Llandudno
 Whose capacity for drink he just didn' know.
 Vines, beers, and gins -
 - The result of his sins
 Was black smoke from just near his kidney'o

Or perhaps a little more elegantly, from Alliver's American (New Jersey) period :-

Though feathered friends eat fruit and squirt mankind with lime,
 I cannot find my heart holds blame nor black-wished time
 Nor even thoughts of native choipin' boidies as
 Sources of *Saccharomyces ellipsoideus*.....

An interesting concept, particularly when one considers the odd bouquet and flavour of the *Vitis labrusca* wines produced in the Northern states of the USA. One could compare this fragment with his lines following a visit to California and the great vineyards of Santa Clara and the Napa Valley, which are immortally preserved on the back of a jellyroll wrapper:-

As I wandered, stoned and happy,
 Full of juice and feeling sappy,
 Came the words of my old Pappy,
 "Don't drink stuff that smells of Nappy".

Here, of course, it is up to the British reader to make his own interpretation of what might be American colloquialisms, such as 'Nappy' representing Napa Valley wines, with their noticeably strong bouquets, or Napalm, well known for its extreme burning characteristics. They could equally relate to a reversion by the writer to the squalid days of his Northern upbringing, where a 'Nappy' was an absorbent under-garment used to keep infant children fit for human company, which also had its individual, and strong bouquet. It would appear the writer is perhaps confused in his own mind between the distinctive odours of sulphur dioxide and urea, and the reader can only apply his own criteria and decide for himself or herself on the relative merits of foxy wines, catty wines, or kiddies' involuntary liquid products. Alliver has an open, if somewhat one-track mind, and I prefer his earlier works, such as:-

When I was at the Wine Fair, I heard a fellow mutter
 "If I drink another bottle I shall fall down in the gutter!",
 And I thought, the folk I can't abide are miseries and grouchers
 But more important, where the hell did he get so many vouchers?

CONNOISSEUR

(And that, I think, is sufficient literary comment for any magazine!- Editor)

PEGGY BAKER - A TRIBUTE

In the last issue of News & Views there was a brief mention of the passing away of Peggy Baker, a lady who had been very active in the winemaking hobby for many years. I would like to outline some of the work that Peggy did for our hobby, as the effort, energy, and enthusiasm lavished on improving and expanding the craft is typical of so many of her generation who will remain unsung in their passing. Read this then, not just as a tribute to Peggy, but to many of her contemporaries who did such sterling work in the founding of home winemaking as a skill and social activity beyond its original cottage-craft level.

Peggy started winemaking in the late '50s, and because of sugar rationing in World War 2 she developed a natural dry palate. She joined Faversham Winemakers in 1963, and was soon a successful exhibitor at several Regional Shows, including the Flower Class at Middlesex Festival, and most points in the 1968 Surrey County Show.

Peggy passed the National Guild of Judges examination at Greenford Middlesex Festival in 1969, and is believed to have been Kent's first National Judge. Thereafter Peggy judged at National, Regional, and local shows for many years until ill-health made it necessary for her to be placed on the inactive list.

During the years she enjoyed reasonable health Peggy was very supportive to her husband Stan in the formation of several wine clubs in north Kent. Being an expert cook she assisted in providing food for serving at the clubs' social events. When Stan founded the Civil Service Wine Society in 1975 and the Rochester Wine Society in 1980 Peggy regularly provided food for the tastings. In her youth she had a magnificent singing voice and was

invited by an opera singer to emigrate to America to have training as a professional; luckily for Stan and the hobby, family problems prevented her taking up this offer.

Later in life she developed diabetes as well as asthma, and elected to continue judging as long as she could, but only of dry wine classes. In the last four years of her life she was largely confined to home, but was never heard to really complain about her lot.

So passed one of the hobby's well-beloved ladies, a delightful personality and a representative of her time.

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HOBBREW TODAY

I have had a letter from Evelyn Barrett, the Editor of this popular give-away newspaper, saying that she frequently receives requests from circles for supplies of Homebrew Today. However, this is not practicable, as the copies go direct from the printers to the wholesalers, who in their turn pass them on to their retail customers. Only a few copies go to the Editor for use within the office, advertising, etc. and separate packages for Guilds are not available.

However, Evelyn has offered that if any Guild or Federation is running a large show to which the public will be admitted, she will try and arrange for a wholesaler to supply a packet of 250 copies for distribution.

Homebrew Today is for attracting new entrants to the hobby, and guiding novices, hence the need for public access to the show.

As the arrangements have to be made through the trade, any interested group will have to give the Editor of Homebrew Today plenty of notice.

THE CENTRAL COUNTIES AMATEUR WINEMAKERS FEDERATION

Members of NAWB maybe interested in a new Federation that was formed in February 1987, to serve Circles in Leicestershire and the surrounding counties. It was conceived by Brian Edwards, Chairman, and representatives of sixteen Circles attended an inaugural meeting; about a third of the Circles in the area have already joined. A Steering Committee was elected, to put proposals to the first AGM, to be held in October 1987.

The new Federation promises many advantages to its members, including lists of speakers, and National, Federation, and "locally approved" judges, (whatever they are). An ambitious and varied programme of social and cultural events is being put forward, including a Federation competition in early 1988. Further information can be obtained from the Federation's PRO, Don Haynes, of 9 Cromwell Close, Walcote, Lutterworth, Leicestershire LE17 4JJ, or telephone Lutterworth 4250.

NAWB wishes the new Federation every success, and looks forward to the CCAWF and its members joining NAWB, and turning out at Brighton in force.

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COMMERCIAL WINES

I thought that you might be interested in the following breakdown of the price of an average bottle of table wine costing £2. (Source: Wine & Spirit

Assoc.)	Cost of Wine	£0.25	
	Distribution/Retailing	£0.48	
	Bottling/Shipping	£0.32	
	Excise Duty	£0.69	} Taxes take 47.5%
	VAT	£0.26	

With acknowledgements to 'Wine News No.1' and the Wine Development Board for the above, and their 'Wine Scene' (Jan '86) for the quiz overleaf.

TEST YOUR WINE WITS!



Here is a not-too-difficult quiz about wine. Points for each correct answer are shown, and par for the course is 16. If you score between 17 and 22 you are doing well. Anything over that means that you know your wine! Answers are upside down.

1. Match these wine regions to the countries:

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| Australia | Umbria |
| Cyprus | Estremadura |
| Italy | Troodos |
| South Africa | Barossa Valley |
| Portugal | Stellenbosch |

(Score 1 for each correct matching)

2. Which South American wine-making country is known as La Tierra del Vino?

(Score 2)

3. What is the meaning of a 'fortified' wine?

(Score 2)

4. What is the full name of Jerez, in south-west Spain, which gives its name to sherry?

(Score 2)

5. What distinguishes English wine from British wine?

(Score 2)

9. Which country, with a border on the Black Sea, has doubled its

wine exports to Britain in three years?

(Score 2)

7. How is it that New Zealand wines are sometimes available in Britain before grapes have been gathered in Europe?

(Score 2)

8. Zinfandel is a native grape of - Australia? France? Israel? California?

(Score 2)

9. What is the meaning of 'methode champenoise' on the label of a bottle of sparkling wine?

(Score 2)

10. Which of these countries supplies the biggest single selling branded wine in Britain?

Spain, Yugoslavia, Italy, Germany

(Score 2)

11. Match these wines to their country. (Score 1 for each correct pair)

- | | |
|---------|------------|
| France | Tokay |
| Greece | Ricja |
| Germany | Hermitage |
| Hungary | Retsina |
| Spain | Piesporter |

- (1) Australia/Barossa Valley
 Cyprus/Troodos Italy/Umbria South Africa/Stellenbosch
 Portugal/Estremadura
 (2) Chile
 (3) Wine to which brandy or spirit has been added during its production (e.g. Port, Madras, Sherry, Marsala).
 (4) Jerez de la Frontera
 (5) English wine is made by traditional methods with fresh grapes grown in this country. British wine is made with imported grape juice concentrate.
 (6) Bulgaria
 (7) There is a six months' difference in the harvest time between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.
 (8) California
 (9) The wine has been made in a similar way to that of Champagne (Use of the term outside Champagne will be banned from 1995 under an EEC regulation).
 (10) Yugoslavia
 (11) France/Hermitage Greece/Retsina Germany/Piesporter Hungary/Tokay Spain/Ricja