

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

**NEWS AND VIEWS**

**NOVEMBER 1987**



**President: Mr. P. Awbery**

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## NAWB (A)

## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WINE AND BEERMAKERS (AMATEUR)

## NEWS AND VIEWS

NOVEMBER 1987

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EDITORIAL

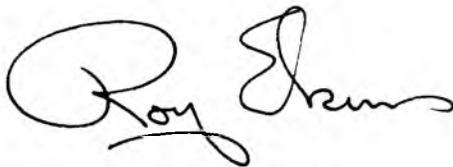
News & Views this issue looks slightly different; in an attempt to pack a little more into the few pages available to us without upsetting our Treasurer Mike Hayter, I have taken advantage of an improvement in my computer program that now allows me to use 1½-line spacing between lines of print instead of the wasteful 2-line spacing used before. All I need now is contributors to fill up the extra space this creates. Why not do your bit - send me a recipe, a review of a book or new kit (but it must be made up strictly according to manufacturer's instructions), or a short description of a holiday locked in a distillery or picking wild figs in darkest Africa. Has your Circle had an unusual day out? Have you got a particularly good recipe? Have you driven your mother-in-law away at last by continually quenching her thirst her with mousey wine? Gems such as this, nuggets of pure gold for brewers, are easily jotted down on a sheet of paper - don't worry about spellings or lapses of grammar, that's what an Editor's for - and hundreds of fellow members will love to read your words of wisdom. Funny things happen to all of us; last night I went through one Mersey

Tunnel to Birkenhead, and returned home, to my astonishment, through the other. I still can't work out quite how I managed it!

So do please take pity on your Editor; all contributions, whether serious or amusing, will be very welcome, and published if at all possible. I don't have a panel of famous writers to call on, but we do have several hundred very talented members and I hope to hear from more of you in the future.

And in view of the demise of The Amateur Winemaker and the Practical Winemaking & Brewing magazines, I have tried to make this issue a little more varied than before, just to help keep members in touch with what's going on in the great wide world of wine and beer making. There's a short report on the North Western Federation weekend, reviews of one or two new products, and a few other goodies tucked away among the pages. I hope you like the changes, but I shan't know unless you tell me. (Hint!)

So, without further Editorial waffle, on with the motley!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roy Evans". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "E".

Editor

#### COMMITTEE NEWS

The Committee heard that Dave Pulley, our energetic Membership and Entries Secretary, had suffered an accident that put him in hospital for a week or so. He would seem to be recovering rapidly, judging by the letters he is now sending out to Committee members who have overlooked paying their subs! We must all thank his wife Maggie for carrying on the good work for him during this period, getting out the draft copies of the 1988 Schedule.

1988: Work on the 1988 show at Brighton is forging ahead, and it promises to be one of the most spacious events yet held, which will please those 750 souls who came to Llandudno! Look out for details on Brighton with our next issue of News & Views. If you are going as a party, early booking of accommodation might be advisable. Conference tickets will cost Members £5, non-Members £12; these prices include corkage of £1.50 per head imposed by Brighton. In view of the poor turnout on occasion at the Sunday presentation of awards, the Mayor of Brighton has kindly agreed to introduce on Saturday evening the winners of the major trophies, i.e. the NAWB Master, Master Winemaker, Master Brewer, and the representative of the best Circle. Trophies will not be awarded until Sunday, because of the need for security. By the way, you might be interested to know that all the trophies were re-valued at Llandudno, and their total worth is now well over £12,000! Don't you agree that they are well worth competing for? And there is another new cup for General Stewards to compete for, so put your name down to steward as soon as you like. There's a great need for Stewards - see your schedule.

1989: The decision has been taken: 1989 will be at Blackpool. After enquiries, it was arranged that we will be visiting the Norbreck Hotel in North Shore, and members will be able to stay at the Norbreck, at advantageous prices that are being negotiated, or at accommodation of their own choosing elsewhere. Everything will be held under the one roof: there is a huge room available to us for dances etc. - we'll never fill it! - - plus an ample showing area, Civic Reception on Saturday, use of heated indoor swimming pool, gymnasium, space for trade stands....everything you could wish for. Details will follow later.

Because of the age of our existing computer, and the ever-increasing amount of work that is done on these machines, NAWB is to buy another computer for use by our Entries and Membership Secretary; without a computer the results could not possibly be processed so quickly at the Show, and every News & Views envelope would have to be hand-addressed, instead of having a pre-printed adhesive label popped onto it.

The Grand Draw tickets will be sent out later under separate cover by Brian Edwards, our Fund Raiser. Sell as many as you possibly can, we rely largely on such efforts to keep NAWB solvent.

The next Committee Meeting will be held on Feb. 7th 1988.

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#### IN MEMORIAM

Don Sayers, a NAWB member for over twenty years, and a National Guild Wine Judge, passed peacefully away, aged 80, on September 2nd. Don, who lived most of his life in a small East Sussex village, was a meticulous winemaker and recorded the fermentation temperature of his musts by means of a chart on a revolving drum. He was by profession a chemical engineer, and assessed the acid levels of his wines by titration methods. Don recalled the bitterly cold winters in the early part of the century when a gallon of wine made by his grandfather froze on the kitchen table. During the latter part of his fifty years of winemaking Don specialised in sparkling wines and ciders made from the fruit of his own apple trees, and quite recently gave a most interesting talk on this topic, with samples, and on the use of activated carbon to remove off-flavours, to the members of the Tunbridge Wells Winemakers Circle. He was a founder member of the Bexhill and Hastings Circle. Don derived great pleasure in cracking a bottle of his own brew, to share with his many friends.

(Report by Stan Baker)

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#### CORRESPONDENCE

As you know from my report on the National at Llandudno in the June issue of News & Views, we were honoured to have as visitors the Chairman, Ian McNeill, and the Secretary, Mrs Marie Balfour, of the Scottish Association of Amateur Winemakers Circles, and their spouses. This was a notable first

contact between the two Associations, and Tom McArthur has kindly agreed to my printing the letter he subsequently received from Ian McNeill. A similar letter was sent to Gerry Sparrow as well. Tom's letter reads:-

Dear Tom,

This is a much belated note to thank you for all the arrangements you made to ensure that our visit to the National was a success.

The four of us thoroughly enjoyed our weekend, and were able to fulfil the aim of our visit and that was to meet as many of your officials as possible and to culture a relationship between the two Associations. Everyone went to lot of trouble to make us welcome at the social events and the show itself, which was most impressive.

I realised that you were very busy over the weekend and I didn't get the chance to chat to you on many occasions, but I am looking forward very much to meeting you and Gerry, at our seminar in October.

Yours sincerely,

Ian McNeill

And that, we all hope, will be the first step towards a new but long-lasting link between all the winemakers and brewers in the United Kingdom. Let's now hear from the three Societies in Northern Ireland; we know they are there, for I have judged for them in the past!

Judith Irwin has sent me a G K Chesterton quotation, which she thinks appropriate to winemakers, but I'm not too sure about the nuts! :-

The Englishman

St George he is for England.  
 And shall wear the shield he wore  
 When we go out in armour  
 With the battle-cross before.  
 But though he is jolly company  
 And very pleased to dine,  
 It isn't safe to give him nuts  
 Unless you give him wine.

A useful leaflet, obtainable from the Weald & Downland Vineyards Association, is 'Vineyards and English Wines in the South East.' This handy reference paper tells the unaware about English wines and British wines, lists the vineyards open to visitors and those that are not, and gives a useful little map showing all the vineyards in the South East. Copies are available from Dr. Ivan Williams, Harefield, Stream Lane, Hawkhurst, Kent, TN18 4 RD. For details of vineyards in other areas, apply to the English Vineyards Association, The Ridge, Lamberhurst, Kent.

Vintage Wine Tours of Bath have run some excellent trips abroad, which many winemakers have enjoyed. I hope to have details of their 1988 proposed tours in our next issue, but you can in the meantime apply direct to them at 8 Belmont, Lansdown Rd. Bath BA1 5DZ Tel. (0225) 315834 or 315659.

President of Manchester are also running Wine Tours again in 1988, to the Mosel & Rhine Valley, Italy, France Spain & Portugal, Champagne, Loire Valley & Bordeaux, Burgundy Alsace & the Rhine, and an English Wine Weekend. Apply to 178 Corn Exchange Buildings, Fennel St, Manchester 4 3HW.

Frank Scholes of Wakefield, who has a very serious vision problem, but manages with his wife to struggle doggedly to the National by public transport nearly every year, writes as follows;

Dear Editor,

I managed to read through the News Letter & I was pleased to see that the bottle corks have now been changed to white plastic hard topped type, as I have not been able to obtain all-cork type of any quality in this area for at least two years, and would most likely have been stumped for some at the next show, if I am able to attend.

With reference to your idea about the News & Views I personally would not be against making some contribution towards this, if only to cover the cost of postage. As to selling it to Federations & Circles, this is another matter, that would put quite a lot more work on you & it would be a gamble. In my past experience, writing was always a bit of an headache, and we had to shop around. Editors seem to have a lot of difficulty getting contributors to write for them. (How true - Ed.) (continued overleaf)

I also read Stan Baker's report on the possibility of having the National in London. The prices he quoted are very reasonable, and cheap as regards London, and I think it would be ideal especially for our younger members, but for such as myself we would not be inclined to go gallivanting around London at our time of life. In fact, we now dread travelling in the Underground with bottles and luggage.

I can assure you that if it is decided to go there, we will endeavour to attend, if we are spared until then.

I am, yours fraternally,  
Frank Scholes.

As you have already read, we are going to Blackpool, not London, for 1989, but doesn't a letter like this make you proud of the strength and determination of some of our members ? I wonder why so few of our fitter members will follow Frank's example and write to me.....

Periodically I send a copy of News & Views to a correspondent in Holland, Jan van Schaik, who publishes a pocket-size magazine, "Vakblad", which is about amateur winemaking and brewing. I speak no Dutch, though I can work out that 'Recepten voor wijn' is a recipe for wine, but Jan speaks excellent English. He wrote this letter to me recently, which I am sure you will find most interesting:-

Dear Roy,

It was a pleasant surprise receiving News & Views again. I had just returned from a cycling tour with our students on this marvellous day and I read it in our garden in one go.

It pleases me that the hobby is still flourishing and also that there is a bond of friendship among winemakers and beerbrewers.

I hear from Gerry Fowles that the magazine started by Berry has stopped. I think it a loss. Do you think there will be a new magazine coming? If I lived in Britain and was a member of the National Association I would advise them to start with it straight away. Not in colour, but about the same size as News & Views but with more illustrations. 'Wine For All Seasons' is also good, but more for advanced winemakers. My own magazine has now grown to 1000 per month.

In May a liqueur book was published, written by my friend Willem van der Velden and myself. It deals with the production of drinks such as whisky, gin, ouzo, cognac, poire william, sloe gin etc. Perhaps it will be translated into English. Of course it is forbidden to distil, but writing about it is not. When my wife and I were in Scotland we could not find any book dealing with the technique of whisky making. Of course they sold books for tourists, but these were too superficial. We also asked the brewmasters at the distilleries and they told us that the only way of mastering the craft was to work at the distillery.

The number of guilds in Holland is still growing, I think there are more than 60 now, scattered all over the country. In Zeeland, our county, we have 4 guilds and we organise a show together once a year. In May it was our turn, and we had 200 wine and 200 beer entries. It was the first time that beer equalled wine in numbers.

After having trained 2 groups of wine judges I started training beer judges. We have 15 qualified beer judges now and a group of 14 is being trained. They will get 8 lessons and then try to take the exam. In November we have a training weekend at a small brewery in Belgium, with lectures from teachers from the school for brewers, and beer tastings guided by experts.

Taking part in the (National) weekend in Brighton would seem possible, since it is not so far from the ferry. When the programme is ready, would you send me one? I would like to steward some wine or beer class, depending on the need there is, just to compare your way of working with ours.

On average I do one lecture a week in Holland or Belgium. Last year I even did a lecture in Hastings for the Golden Circle, of which Tilly Timbrell was the President. My friend Rinus van Reems and I had a very enjoyable weekend.

If a guild in the South East would like me to do a lecture, it could only be done at the weekend. The cost would be the return ticket for the ferry, if they collect me. I won't need a car then.

I do hope to receive News & Views regularly, in exchange for 'Vakblad'.

Yours sincerely,

Jan

Well, there's an offer for our Southern circles to follow up, and I'm sure

Jan will be most welcome if he comes to Brighton to steward, or even just observe..

And talking of venues, George Lashbrook did a lot of research on behalf of NAWB into the cost of running the National at Torquay, 'The English Riviera Centre'. He sent quite a comprehensive report to the Committee, and an edited summary follows. George's message is clear : if you want a good Conference and Show weekend, then you have to be prepared to pay for it. Good sites at low cost become increasingly rare, and as local authorities become ever more hard pressed financially - what's your Rates bill like this year? - they are less and less able to subsidise visiting conferences.

#### TORQUAY - POTENTIAL FESTIVAL VENUE WITH A BIG DIFFERENCE

First of all I would like to congratulate Stan Baker on his report on the possibility of a site in London for a NAWB Festival. I too think that it is time we stormed the capital, but I think that it should be extended to say four days, this would mean that we would be able to visit other places of interest in the locality, and also, it would not be such a hectic rush as at the present festivals.

The new complex at Torquay was due to open in early May 1987, and there would not be a suitable date for NAWB until 1991 or 1992, as 1990 will be at Scarborough.

The site is basically two large halls, each with a balcony extending round three sides; there is also a number of smaller rooms, and we can have any combination of these rooms and halls. Now for a few mind-boggling figures. (Llandudno equivalent figures are in brackets - Ed.)

The Conference Hall can seat 950 (700) plus 550 (nil) on the balcony. Without the seating, the floor area is 844 sq metres (701) and the balcony 482 (nil). The Exhibition Hall is 1005 sq. m. (470) and the balcony 747 sq.m. (nil). There are also two meeting rooms of 48 capacity each, and two of 72, plus two lounges of 160 persons and one of 150. Llandudno could not offer anything like these facilities.

That's the good news, now for the bad news - COST. there are two ways of booking the accommodation, but overall the gross cost on 1987 figures would be about £3310, or for 800 visitors, approx. £5 per head, plus other incidental show running expenses of £3 or £4,, and accommodation. Prices are certain to rise between 1987 and 1991. The other method of charging involves booking meals (lunch and dinner for two days) for every delegate, and this gives a charge of about £30 per head plus running expenses and bed and breakfast. Hotels in Torquay are thought generally to be better value than in Llandudno.

So, fellow members, as I said at the AGM, it is up to all of us to decide whether we are content to be overcrowded, or for about £8 plus accommodation, or £30 plus B&B, we would have a venue worth shouting about. And DON'T FORGET, it is only for one weekend in the year, AND YOU ONLY GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR. So please write and let your Committee know YOUR thoughts on this subject, so they can act according to your wishes in the future.  
George Lashbrook,  
Taunton

Thank you, George; perhaps these views from an ex-Committee member will help the other members to appreciate the difficulties the Committee members have. They try each year to find suitable sites, within everyone's pocket, and staged in varying parts of the country to give everyone easy access to the Show at frequent intervals. Realistic costings must come in the near future, as running a huge event of this sort on a shoestring budget is an unjustifiable burden on the volunteers who hold office, and one unforeseen financial disaster could wreck NAWB beyond recovery.

Celia Scottow from Shirley, Solihull, writes:

The National is the one weekend a year when we manage a few days away without our children. We look forward to staying in a good hotel in a pleasant and restful resort, preferably by the sea. The idea of a weekend spent in single rooms on a university campus does not appeal; eating food in a mass catering establishment does not appeal; a battle with London's traffic noise and fumes does not appeal. We would miss an early morning stroll along a quiet beach, fresh air, and being waited on. We look forward

to this weekend when we can relax with good wine and good company in pleasant surroundings. London - no thank you.

Yours sincerely

Celia M H Scottow

P.S. We also enjoy the occasional dance.

Well, Celia, I'm sure there are many who echo your thoughts but never put them on paper. London is out, for the time being at least. As explained above, the delightful resorts are there, but we may have to pay more for them in years to come. As for universities, they do vary a lot. You should have seen the single beds whizzing round the corridors at Nottingham when the married couples were reorganising their accommodation; the first people in University history to have spare rooms for parties etc.! And the food was surprisingly good, with, if I remember correctly, waitress service at least for dinner in the evening. Admittedly, it wasn't 5-star treatment, but I personally preferred it to the poor service at Llandudno's Marine Hotel. The good wine and the good company are synonymous with any NAWB weekend, no matter where it is held. You do well to leave your children behind, a feat we never managed, so my wife had to stay at home with them. I was tempted to take them with us, and then leave them behind when we returned home, but Irene thought this was unfair on the host town.

Lance Murgatroyd sent a newsy letter from Shipley, in W Yorkshire:

Dear Roy

I was very much interested in the 'special announcement' article on pages 14 & 15 of June '87 edition of News & Views. I have been somewhat disturbed by the decline of various publications about our hobby, some of which weren't available in this area anyway. With the possible expansion of News & Views to incorporate articles on wine and beer making, recipes, new ideas etc. I'm all in favour of that even if it means making a charge for each issue. I would also be in total agreement with the introduction of a 'subscription membership'. I look forward to N&V arriving, and keeping in touch this way would ensure that feeling of still 'belonging' to the Association. I for one, under the present system would let my membership lapse over the next two years, as attending the Conference in Brighton next

year and possibly London in 1989 would be just a little too much both from an expense and a travelling point of view. I would still retain my membership, of course, if this new 'subscription membership' was introduced.

I have enjoyed attending the National shows over the last two years. I have only been making wines and beers for a relatively short time, and Scarborough was my first time of entering. I took a first with my Dry Mead, and a few other places, including a beer! This encouraged me to take the Guild of Judges examination, which I passed last year. Taking a few months to get 'on the circuit', so to speak, I'd had very few judging appointments before the National in Llandudno was upon us. Due to my lack of practical experience and confidence I was sorely tempted to decline at the last minute, but I'm glad I didn't; my wife and I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend. I got a good class, Flower Dry Excluding Elder, 35 bottles, some exceptional bouquets, and on only my second National I picked up a few placings again for my own entries - what a wonderful weekend.

Six weeks later it was the Yorkshire Federation Show in Scarborough. Now this one brought me down to earth! The class I shared was Elder/Blackberry Dry - 109 entries. After that stint I have never looked forward more to a cup of tea in my life! (Can you get tannin-free tea?)

Looking forward to seeing you in Baildon on November 2nd for the Sainsbury Talk and Tasting,

Yours sincerely, etc.

A nice success story, Lance, and thanks for telling us about it. Yours is one of the only two letters (both favourable) I have received about extending N&V, charging for it, or having a subscription membership, so presumably the vast majority of our present members are too indifferent to bother about what I regard as one of the Associations most important functions - keeping our members in touch with what's going on within NAWB and now within the hobby as a whole. Perhaps as Editor I over-estimate the newsletter's importance, or the role it plays in the Association.

## NEW PRODUCTS REVIEW

As the mags. have both ceased publication I thought it would help members to keep in touch with the great world outside Little Worpleton Magna, or wherever you live, if I published reviews of new products, books, ingredients or methods, if and when I heard about them. If you are a manufacturer or distributor of something novel, then you are welcome to send a sample for appraisal and testing, and a bit of free publicity. And of course, any other reader is welcome - indeed, encouraged! - to join in with news of what's new. For future issues I will try and get some other opinions for these reviews, but for this issue there just ain't time.

So, just what is new? Well, VINA now import a couple of beer kits from Australia - 'sright, sport, genuine hopped malt from Cooper's Brewery in Leabrook, South Australia, brewers for 122 years. The concentrated wort comes in the familiar-sized 1.25 L. can, with instructions and Cooper's own yeast in a sachet under a plastic lid. At present there are two kits available in the UK, Lager and Draught, and there are two others to follow, namely Real Ale and Stout. These kits should prove popular, as Coopers are the biggest name in homebrew in Oz - over 50% of the market. And as the original Thomas Cooper was a Yorkshireman, with two wives and nineteen kids, and lived to 71 years of age, his brew must have something going for it.

I have made up the Lager, and it was a simple process, no skimming, fining, or anything else. When it came to bottling, I was surprised to find a misprint in the instructions, which told me to put twice as much priming sugar in a pint bottle as in a quart, which could lead to a novice producing some explosive bottles! However, the metric sizes are given as well, so presumably Coopers aren't waging war on Pommle novice brewers. The lager turned out the way I like it; though I'm not a beer judge, I have made a habit of getting plenty of experience in tasting - guzzling - a great range of different beers, and I find this lager nice and bitter, not the indifferent dishwasher so often met in commercial lagers. Look for the upside-down cans in your local homebrew shop, £3.99 for a five-gallon kit.

HAMBLETON BARD have a range of novel products going at the moment, including their Brewer's Latch - now, don't be bad-minded, it's nothing to do with Brewer's Droop - but it is a very useful gadget for unscrewing 4-inch beer keg lids etc. Coming soon is a carrying handle for kegs. At the N W Federation Show Douglas Smith also introduced Bard's new 'Supremx Cleaner & Steriliser', powerful detergent granules that only take 1-2 teaspoonsful per gallon of warm water for normal cleaning, and double strength and an overnight soak for badly stained items like my ancient and forgotten fermenters. Good stuff! 250 g for £1.47, 750 g for £2.99.

PRESIDENT TRAVEL have arranged a coach for members in the North West to travel to Brighton next year. Details are : Luxury coach to take you from a local pick-up point to Brighton, staying at the Imperial Hotel for two nights, with dinner, bed, and full English breakfast. All rooms have a private bathroom. There is an optional wine tasting on the return journey. The cost for the weekend is just £79, sharing a twin room.. If you are interested, telephone 061 834 1660, and do mention you read it in N & V! NB: you will of course also have to buy your Conference ticket from NAWB

"LET FRESH AIR PRESS THE JUICE OUT OF YOUR FRUIT." That does sound a bit of a tall story, but the ingenious CECIL VACUUM SYSTEMS PRESS does just that, by using a pump to create a partial vacuum in the system, and the natural atmospheric pressure crushes soft or prepared fruits and extracts the juice, neatly sucking it into an attached one litre plastic canister. It's a continuous process, though an occasional pump or two will help with extraction. It's quick and easy, and is ideal for juice extraction for up to 1½ kilos of fruit at a time. Clear and simple instructions are enclosed, and it is typical of the thought that has gone into this product, that the instruction leaflet has been printed on a plasticised paper; you needn't worry that it will go soggy if you drop it in a puddle on your kitchen unit. (I just tested mine under the tap, then shook it dry!).

This is a beautifully presented kit, and J E and R K Cecil are to be congratulated. (£15 inc. P & P, from C V S, 9 School Place, Oxford OX1 4RG, or from Musts of Yapton, or from your local supplier).

Finally, can I introduce the new JETSTREAM BOTTLE WASH, retailing at around £7.99, a nicely engineered gadget that goes on to your kitchen tap, and cleans bottles with a powerful jet of water. It won't flood the kitchen, as the water is only released when the bottle is pressed down on the spring-loaded cap. JETSTREAM is fitted with a yard of hose, with a wing-nut connector to fit most standard taps, and it has three little rubber suckers in the base, to prevent it from sliding around when in use. Available from your usual supplier, and manufactured by Dalatek Ltd of Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Notts. (0623 753933).

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THE NORTH WESTERN FEDERATION OF AMATEUR WINEMAKING SOCIETIES this year renewed its membership of NAWB, so I went along to Pontin's Holiday Village at Ainsdale, Southport, to their Twentieth Annual Conference & Show on October 9-11. Here is a brief report of that visit.

Much of my time was taken up with distributing samples of Sainsbury's wines, but enough time was free to look around, talk to old friends, and generally see what was going on. About 1000 stayed for the weekend, and the 264 who actually entered put in a total of 2138 entries - wines by purpose, wines by ingredient, wines simulating commercial wines; beers, cookery, and flower arrangements. The show also always involves a number of Circles putting on decorative stands; this year's common theme was "Winemaking Through The Ages", with Chorley Wine & Beer Circle winning the trophy. And of course a range of commercial stands apart from Sainsbury's: Mariom Whittow with cards and books, Hambleton Bard, Corkers of Rochdale, Ritchie Products, President Travel of Manchester, Mr & Mrs Cecil with their new Vacuum Juice Extractor, Paine's (John Bull), and John Hoskins of Stockport

Roy Dutson of Bolton, a National Guild Beer Judge, set a new record by being the first person ever to achieve both Master Winemaker and Master Beer Maker, the latter award being shared with Joe Hughes of Manchester; Joe too is a National Guild member, a Wine Judge. The Society with most points overall was Bolton, awarded the Millledge Trophy.

I don't have a list of members to report on any other NAWB members who gained awards there, though I did notice Alan Procter of Phoenix in the North East won the Mayvern trophy for the Three Bottle class. From the other end of the country, though not as successful, came George Lashbrook from Devon, so you can see that many NAWB members will travel long distances to attend a good show weekend, as well as to their own National.

Friday night always involves a grand dance and social evening, and Saturday evening includes what must be the most elaborate and the biggest Fancy Dress procession in the hobby, so there is plenty of spectacular entertainment to pass away one's drinking time. On the informative side, there was an "Any questions" team of experts to quiz on wine and beer-making, on Saturday afternoon, and on Sunday morning an interesting and lively address by Prof. Gerry Fowles - yet another NGWBJ member - on the subject of "Making Quality Wines". This was followed by the presentation of awards, and the closure of the conference for another year. A very successful weekend; good fellowship and good drink as always!

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#### BOOK REVIEWS

Or rather, Book Review, for only one new book has come my way for review in recent months, and that is on commercial wines. "Sainsbury's Book of Wine", written by Oz Clarke, was published this autumn, and it really is an excellent publication. Written in the author's own light-hearted style, it covers the whole world of wine in 260 pages, with hundreds of colour photographs, paintings, and maps. It's an eminently readable book; a passage taken at random reads "Chiroubles matches its name - chirpy, flirtatious wine - springtime innocence. Don't age this: innocence doesn't wear well." Or on his arrival by air in Bordeaux - "We're never going to know Merignac's potential as a wine producer, because our plane has just landed where the vines used to be."

Oz Clarke has won many friends and admirers through his appearances on 'The Food & Drink' programme on television, and I am sure this book will only strengthen his reputation. It is full of information, yet not overly

technical, and has already proved useful in clarifying a point I wasn't sure about. Published in hardback, it's a gift at £5.95. Available, as you might expect, through all branches of Sainsbury's, and an ideal Christmas present for any wine lover.

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#### RED LEADERS

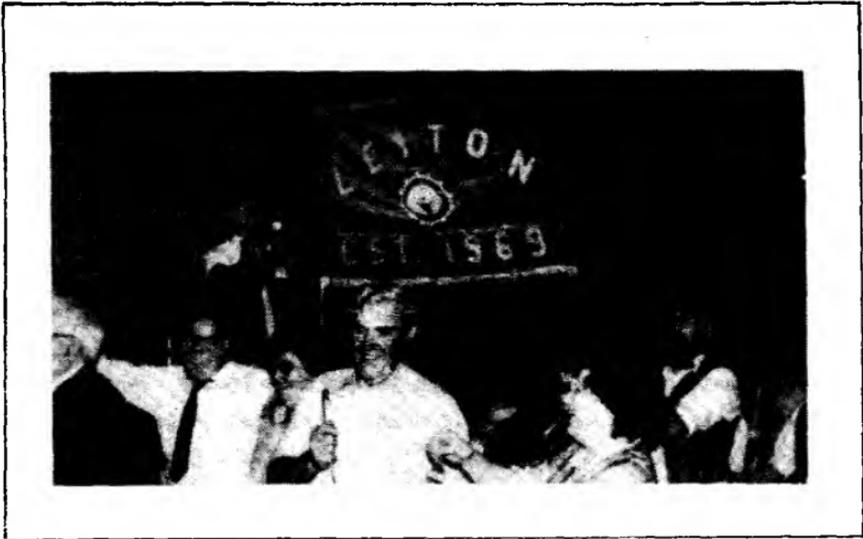
How many times have you heard it said that in the UK we drink mostly white wine? The assumption is, of course, that we prefer white wine. But perhaps it is merely that, as a nation, we are a little more choosy about which red wines we go for in a big way. If we find one we like we give it our wholehearted support. So the Bulgarians can be justifiably proud that the most popular wine of their much-praised range is red - Bulgarian Cabernet Sauvignon (WDB code D) is already an object lesson for many other wine producers in how to make a good, lively, enjoyable red wine at a price that encourages people to try it.

And once at home with the berry-like fruit of the Bulgarian Suhindol Cabernet Sauvignon, there's no barrier to trying the high-grown Sakar Mountain Cabernet.

Now there are even more good Cabernet Sauvignon wines from Bulgaria. From the Svichtov region there's a concentrated, blackcurranty, estate-bottled Cabernet Sauvignon; the pride of the range is a single vineyard reserve wine, from the Oriahovitza vineyard in the Nova Zagora region, in numbered bottles. Even this isn't expensive (around £2.60) so Bulgaria continues to lead the way for Cabernet.

(Reproduced from "WINE NEWS" No.7, with acknowledgements to the Wine Development Board)

PICTURES AT RANDOM, AND OTHER PLACES.....



LEYTON WINEMAKERS WHOOPING IT UP -----



-----WITH BEDFORD TRUCK WINEMAKERS, AT THE WALES & WEST, 1987

WHILE ROSEBERRY DAZZLE THE N W FEDERATION, OCT. 1986.....



SEC. JUDITH IRWIN ( R ) AND DORIS HUGHES ( L ) at THE NAWB STAND, LLANDUNO 1987



## C'EST LA VIE!

A battle that has pitted old France, the enchanting land of vineyards in the Touraine belt, against new France, the proud developers of high speed trains, is nearing its end with the wine men railroading the mighty French national railway planners into a siding.

It all started when news filtered through the grapevine that the railway company, SNCF, planned to run a new route for its T.G.V. (Train Grande Vitesse) through tiny Vouvray and its vineyards, which have a history going back some 500 years.

Around 150 of the town's producers of the region's renowned white wines made so much noise, including a sit-down strike on the track to block trains going to nearby Tours, that the dispute soon became a national issue.

Said the men from the railway - "France cannot live on patrimony alone. National progress and national pride must take precedence. In any case, we have compulsory purchase orders and the backing of President Mitterand and Prime Minister Jacques Chirac."

"So what," replied the wine men. "The appellation of Vouvray wines is protected by law. Not a vine can be touched without the express permission of the Minister of Agriculture. And he is obliged to follow the advice of the National Institute on the classification of wines, the committee of which has our mayor as a member."

At this point, SNCF lost its bottle. "How about letting us go underneath your vineyards?" they requested. "Certainly," said mayor Gaston Huet, "provided you put back in the same place every stone and particle of soil, otherwise the appellation will be lost."

SNCF retired for a re-think - then agreed to bore a tunnel 90 feet below the bluff on which the finest Vouvray vines grow...at an additional cost of

£22 million. And because the tunnel will pass within a few yards of some of the cellars filled with slow-maturing wines, they are mounting that section of the line on rubber supports to enable the sleeping wines to rest in peace.

SNCF say that any slight vibration will help the wine to age. Says mayor Huet "Then there'd better not be the least vibration. Anyone with the slightest appreciation for our wines knows that they must mature slowly, and never age."

Touché. Mr. Mayor!

(With thanks to the Wine Development Board & "Wine News").

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#### ENGLISH WINES

Many of our members grow their own vines to make wines from the crop of grapes that this country - particularly in the southern counties - is well capable of producing, though one must admit that the whites are far superior to the few reds that are produced. The following report, again reproduced with the kind permission of the Wine Development Board, gives a clear indication of the extent of the commercial vineyards in the UK.

#### EVA's GROWTH CONTINUES

The English Vineyard Association now has 265 members, whose vineyards range from half an acre in size to 50 acres, the average being 4 acres. Although there is no definitive list of vineyards in England and Wales at present - something which the Ministry Of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food will probably be undertaking within the next few years - there is thought to be about 488 hectares (1206 acres) under vine. One enterprising new member of the EVA hopes soon to become the biggest single producer of quality English wine.

Andy Vining, a Hampshire businessman, recently completed the mammoth task

of hand-planting 33,000 vines on 45 acres at East Wellow near Romsey. Meanwhile five and a half thousand vines planted two years ago are expected to produce around 5,000 bottles of wine this autumn - the first commercial 'crop' for Wellow Vineyards.

Mr Vining intends to plant a further 30 acres next spring, increasing the total area under the vine to 80 acres, which he claims will, make Wellow Vineyards the largest venture of its type in the U.K. When Wellow Vineyards is in full production in 1992, the company expects to be selling between 300,000 and 500,000 bottles of wine each year.

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There you are, folks, better buy a few extra demijohns if you're thinking of setting up in opposition ! Just imagine corking half a million bottles - I've got fermenter's wrist just thinking of it. (Fermenter's wrist must not of course, be confused with drinker's elbow, a much more crippling handicap that can quite ruin a homebrewer's social life, and lead to under-nourishment and severe withdrawal symptoms. So beware !)

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Our resident poet, Roy Alliver, has been unusually reticent in answer to my requests for copy for this issue of News and Views. However, in honour of the time of year he has magnanimously produced the following deathless poesy -

NOVEMBER 19th.

If advertisers had their wicked way  
 Today we'd all drink Beaujolais,  
 But don't be a wally  
 Drinking costly Beaujolly,  
 Just stick to yer old vin de pays!

As Editor I didn't think the expense of our literary critic 'Connoisseur' was justified for such a short rendition, but more culture in our next issue if space permits. I wonder if we could persuade Roy Alliver to give a reading of some of his works at Brighton? What do you think of that idea?