

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WINE AND BEER MAKERS  
(Amateur)

NEWS AND VIEWS

FEBRUARY 1988



AGENDA

For the Annual General Meeting to be held on  
Sunday 27th March 1988

MINUTES

of the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday, April 12th 1987.

PRESIDENT: MR. P. AWBERY

PATRONS

CECIL VACUUM SYSTEMS; CHEMPRO LTD;  
CONTINENTAL WINE EXPERTS LTD; EDME MALT EXTRACTS & BEER KITS;  
MUNTON & FISON PLC; JOHNSON HOMEWINE SUPPLIES LTD (VINAMAT);  
RITCHIE PRODUCTS LTD; UNICAN FOODS LTD;  
WANDER FOODS LTD (GEORDIE); VINA (HOME WINEMAKING SUPPLIES)  
LTD; WALKER DESMOND & SONS LTD.

NAWB ( A )

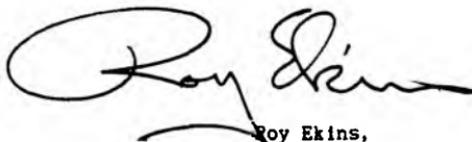
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WINE &amp; BEERMAKERS ( AMATEUR )

NEWS &amp; VIEWS

FEBRUARY 1988

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EDITORIAL

This issue's editorial comment will be mercifully brief; the following pages contain enough solid reading to keep the most industrious of our members with his or her nose buried in them for quite some time. There are the Minutes of last year's Annual General Meeting, somewhat condensed from the first draft that your Committee members were crushed with, some interesting letters, comments, and articles - alas, no pictures this time, but perhaps we can make up for that in our post-National issue - and of course the Notice of the AGM and the Agenda. Do make your wishes known and ensure that you are represented by a lively, energetic committee brimming with good ideas. Remember, apathy is the greatest enemy of voluntary organisations like ours - but don't bother me about it just now, there's a good chap!

Roy Ekins,  
Editor

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Where does the time go ? It hardly seems more than a few weeks ago that we were driving away from Llandudno after another splendid 'National' and here we are again.

I am pleased to report that through the hard work and effort of your Committee we have had another good year. Our finances continue to improve and we hope this will continue.

We have done much research on new venues for our annual pilgrimage and we continue to do so. I am very pleased that we have arranged the next two venues after Brighton and we are still looking at Torquay, London, and perhaps Llandudno again (if it is bigger!).

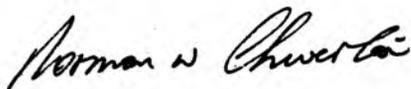
Because of the lack of publicity our movement now has, with the loss of the hobby magazines, we are endeavouring to cooperate with other organisations to see what can be done.

I do hope to meet as many of you as possible at Brighton. I am sure the venue is as perfect as we could get - plenty of room, and hopefully, fine weather by the sea.

Finally, I am very proud to have been your Chairman for the past year and I do hope that as many of you as possible will support us at Brighton.

See you there!

Happy Wine and Beermaking



CHAIRMAN

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

OF WINE AND BEERMAKERS ( AMATEUR )

The Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held in the Main Hall of the Brighton Centre, at Brighton, on Sunday 27th March 1988, commencing at 10.00 am.

Members and delegates attending this meeting should obtain voting slips from the N A W B table during the period of the Show and Conference, and no later than 9.30 am on the day of the meeting, on the production of either:-

- a/ a current membership card, in the case of Individual members, or
- b/ a signed letter of identification from the member Circle, Guild, or Federation, as appropriate.

Voting slips will be accepted as admission cards when members and delegates wish to enter the Hall.

Note: Constitution 4 (Voting) states that 'Each paid-up Member is entitled to one vote on attendance at the General Meeting.'

Unauthorised person will not be admitted to the A G M but arrangements may be made for spouses and partners of authorised persons at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Judith Irwin (Mrs.)  
General Secretary,  
N A W B (A)

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AGENDA

1. The meeting will be opened by the President, Mr. P Awbery.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. Minutes of the 1987 Annual General Meeting.
4. Matters arising.
5. Chairman's Report 1987/88.
6. Treasurer's Report, 1986/87.
7. Election of Officers to the Executive Committee:  
In accordance with the amended Rule 8(d) the following member having served three years will resign and is standing for re-election:  
Mr D Pulley.  
The closing date for receipt of nominations having now passed, no ballot will be required and Mr. Pulley will be elected following the acceptance of the members present.  
The names of one nominee each to represent the interests of  
a/ Member Circles, and b/ Member Federations  
will be received in writing by the General Secretary of NAWB prior to the start of the A G M. Where no nominations are received for posts a/ or b/ above, the Executive may nominate a person to fill the vacancy. [Rule 8(c)]
8. Motions: the following Motions have been received :  
a/ Moved: That the following amendments to the Constitution and Rules be adopted:  
CONSTITUTION: Heading, Page 1 Line 2 to be amended to:  
'CONSTITUTION DATED NOVEMBER 1973 (REVISED 1988)'  
Page 1 Line 3 to be deleted.  
Item 3 page 6/7: delete last paragraph.  
RULES: Heading Page 1 Line 3 to be amended to:  
'RULES DATED NOVEMBER 1973 (REVISED 1988)'  
Page 1 Line 4 to be deleted.  
Rule 5 (b) and (c): Change '31st July' to '31st October'.  
Rule 8(b) Change to 'The Executive shall consist of 12 members'.  
8(b)(i): change from '8 elected members' to '11 elected members'  
8(b)(ii) and (iii) to be deleted.  
8(b)(iv) to be renumbered 8(b)(ii)  
8(c): substitute 'post' for 'posts' and delete references to '(iii)' and '(iv)'.  
Rule 10: Change heading from 'President' to 'President and Vice-President'.  
Renumber existing paragraph as (a), and add paragraph  
'(b) The election of Vice-President shall be on the recommendation of the Executive, to the Annual General Meeting, of a suitable past or present member of the Association to become Vice-President for the ensuing year.  
Proposed by the Executive.  
b/ Moved: That all stewards receive a commemorative glass.  
Proposed: B W Pearce, Scraftoft Village Wine Circle.  
Seconded: R Jarvis, Scraftoft Village Wine Circle
9. Any other Business:
10. Nomination of the President of the Association 1988/89.
11. Presentation of the Executive.
12. The President will close the Meeting.

And a note from Judith Irwin, our General Secretary:-

Dear Members,

Yet another Show and Conference weekend is fast approaching and we will soon be back at Brighton after a nine years' absence. Have you sent off your booking form to Gerry Sparrow? Have you volunteered to be a General Steward or Judge's Steward? We are always in great need of help from our members, so put pen to paper - it's all in the Show Schedule enclosures - and let's have a bumper list of helpers. It is a National Show, not an Executive Committee Effort!

If you intend to attend the A G M - and all members should - then PLEASE read the official notice on page 4 carefully, and make sure you collect your voting slips from the N A W B table during the weekend- don't leave it to Sunday morning, as this causes chaos! Please help us to help you - even voluntary work can be a worry if colleagues won't co-operate. And early collection will avoid those dreaded queues on Sunday morning!

May I wish all those attending a very pleasant weekend, and do please contact me, or any other Committee member, if you have any problems either during the show or after it. I am always interested to hear your comments, whether brickbats or bouquets.

See you all there,

Judith Irwin  
Hon. Secretary

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WINE AND BEERMAKERS (AMATEUR)

HELD ON SUNDAY 12TH APRIL 1987 AT THE ABERCONWY CANOLFAN CENTRE LLANDUDNO

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Mr. L Drysdale in the Chair.

Members were present representing 244 individuals, 7 Honorary, 10 Circles, and 2 Federations.

The Meeting was opened at 10.12 am by the President, Mrs. Freda Stagg, who expressed her delight in the Committee's choice of this new venue, and her pleasure in seeing so many new faces present. She remarked with sorrow on the loss of two of our best-known members during the year, May Drysdale, the Chairman's late wife, and of Peggy Baker, who was also a National Judge, well known in Kent in particular, and late wife of Stan Baker. The Meeting stood for a few moments in memoriam. Mrs. Stagg then handed over to the Chairman to continue the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Mr. J Reeve and Ms. J Barrow.

The Minutes having been circulated, Mr D Reed proposed and Mrs C Lear seconded, that the Minutes be accepted. Carried unopposed.

The only matters arising from the Minutes consisted of the announcement of the Committee expenses rates, continued unaltered for the coming year.

The Chairman then gave his report as follows:-

"The past year has been good for NAWB. Since Scarborough of last year your Executive has been insatiable in its capacity for hard work - we have a very good team - and in view of the fact that most of the members of the Executive Committee are handling more than one post of responsibility, it is encouraging that they efficiently carry out their tasks.

Regrettably we are losing Jim Chettle, our Membership and Awards Secretary; he has some very important commitments for the next couple of years, but Jim says he will be back with us when all is done. So I am sure you will wish to join me in thanking him for his dedicated services at Committee

level for the past ten years.

NAWB is, to quote a well-known phrase, 'Getting there!'; a lot of hard work is still to be done to make NAWB the top organisation in our rewarding hobby, to be admired by all wine and beer makers, not only nationally, but inter-nationally. I mentioned the fact in a recent 'News & Views' that my dream has always been to stage our Annual Show and Conference in London; I had a good response from the members and I thank them for their interest and support. Whilst venues are available, the main problem is accommodation being expensive; however, I am still working on this, and hope to solve the problem for you.

This year's Show has reached new milestones; a record number of entries, a record number of people attending and increased membership, all at a venue for our first visit. Bringing the show to N.Wales was ambitious, but how successful. We keep having to look around the country for new venues, to promote ourselves, to create interest and generate new membership. Success can only be achieved by continued increase in membership; this will improve our strength and financial position.

I would like to thank the Judges and Stewards for their interest and service this weekend, and trust they all enjoyed the entries, and their weekend in Llandudno.

We have been very fortunate in having a very good Local Liaison Officer Mr Hugh Thomas; he has done first-class job for us, and we do thank him most sincerely for a mammoth task well done.

Looking forward to the future, 1988, Brighton Conference Centre will be the venue for next year's Show. If you recall the last time we were at Brighton, which was in 1979, (4117 entries from 398 exhibitors) it was a very successful Conference. The problem we we have when we take the Show South is that we seem to lose the support from our friends in the North, and vice versa. To make our Shows financially successful we need the support of all our members and friends at all venues, be they North or South, East or West, so I ask you to support NAWB at all times.

The work load at Executive level increases annually, but instead of working with the required number of Committee members, we manage to get through all that has to be done with the existing numbers

To all members and friends who have supported us this weekend, I say

"Thank you", not forgetting the Committee for planning, organising and efficiently running this weekend's Show for us all to enjoy. I must add my personal thanks to our Lady President, Mrs Freda Stagg, who has always been devoted to the office she holds, and carried out her duties so sweetly; it has been a pleasure to have you as our first Lady President; thank you, Freda.

For this year's Show we formed a Show Sub-committee as an experiment; it seems to have worked OK, but it will be up to the new Committee to decide on the future of the Sub-committee. The idea of having a Show Sub-committee was to give more time at Executive meetings to discuss new ideas and business relevant to the day to day activities of NAWB.

Our thanks are again extended to Sainsbury's plc for the wine tasting, and more so to Roy Ekins for putting on the talk and tasting. What would we do without our Roy? Lots of new ideas are printed in the March edition of 'News & Views'; we hope you enjoy them.

Finally, my thanks to my fellow Officers and Committee for their year's hard work and the support they have given me at all times.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you."

Brian Edwards then gave his report as retired Treasurer for the year up to 30 June 1986. He said we must not be complacent because the year showed a surplus, against a deficit in the preceding year; this was largely because of the fund-raising activities, and the renewal of cash support by our Patrons during the year, and our thanks must go to the Fund-raiser, Mike Hayter, and our Patrons. He reminded members of the Life Membership that was now available; this was not yet reflected in the accounts, but there had since been some. A good year, but NAWB was still in a dangerous position financially.

Mr J Parrack proposed the acceptance of the accounts, seconded by Mr R Marsdon, and this was accepted unanimously.

Mr M Hayter was elected as a new Committee member, Mr R Ekins was reappointed as Circles' representative, and Mr R Mitchell was appointed as Federations' representative.

Mr A Procter then spoke for the Motion "That this AGM instructs the show committee to adopt the white plastic topped corks for the wine bottles at future National Shows." He argued strongly in favour of white-topped

stoppers, on the grounds of ease of obtaining them, and economy of cost. Mr R Marsdon opposed, he enjoys his drink and likes the appearance of the old-style all-cork stoppers. Mr J Parrack spoke for the motion, saying that despite comments, he had found the plastic-topped cork stoppers fitted perfectly well, but warned that some of them sometimes had a smell of glue about them. Mr T Beck seconded the Motion, pointing out that several Federations now used these stoppers without complaints. The Meeting decided in favour of the Motion by a clear majority.

Other Business : A member enquired about the almost flat-bottomed bottles used for many wines, and their acceptability for showing. Mr N Chiverton explained that slightly punted bottles were acceptable under NGWBJ Rules, which were used by NAWB.

Mr M Hayter the present Treasurer, thanked all for their support, especially Peter and Ann Johnson. On the question of finance, Mr R Butcher thought that to give a true picture of the cost of running NAWB, all Committee members should make a full claim to the Treasurer for the expenses they incurred. Should anyone not wish to accept reimbursement of part or all of his/her expenses, it could be recorded as a donation to NAWB funds.

Mr Pearce suggested that all Stewards should be presented with a commemorative glass at the Brighton Show & Conference in 1988. He thanked the Committee for their efforts, especially for Saturday, but Friday had been overcrowded, fire exits blocked, cramped space for dancing in, and he objected to the practice of booking tables. The Show Manager, Mr D Ives said the overcrowding was largely due to the unprecedented growth in the numbers attending the Conference. The venue was booked on the basis of the numbers attending two years previously, and it was unreal to expect accurate forecasting of the 750 response to holding the weekend in a quite new venue. The local authority had aggravated the position by their insistence that the facilities would be adequate. They had also ignored his advice regarding layout and the tables that would be required.

Saturday evening was a wholly Civic affair, and NAWB had no say in the running of the evening. With regard to table reservations, this is where a degree of selfishness can creep in. The Committee will decide in the coming year whether or not it will be allowed at Brighton. He closed by thanking

everyone for their cooperation and help over the weekend.

Mr G Lashbrook had acquired details of a new conference centre at Torquay; he would pass the details on to the committee. It was apparent from the costings that NAWB members could not expect to continue having first class facilities at cut price charges. A member from Bedford suggested that if the size of each party was advised beforehand, seating could be arranged accordingly.

Mr B Edwards (Burbage) suggested that classes for ciders should be considered for future shows. The Guild (NGWBJ) could be asked to set standards, and his Circle would donate a trophy for cider if introduced. Cider-making is growing in popularity, especially in their area.

The Chairman then closed this part of the meeting. He thanked Mrs Stagg for all she had done in her term as President, and then introduced her successor. Mr Awbery said that he had been proud to be the Association's first Vice-President, and he was honoured to become President.

Mr Roy Butcher was then introduced as the Association's new Vice-President. This was followed by the individual introduction of the Committee members to the assembled members.

Awarded his badge of office, Mr Awbery then brought the meeting to a close, thanking the Chairman, Lenn Drysdale for the year, and Freda Stagg for the dignity and grace brought to the Presidency over the past two years. He remarked on the pleasure of having with us the representatives of the Scottish Association of Winemakers Circles, Mr Ian McNeill (Chairman) and Mrs M Balfour (Hon. Secretary), and their spouses. Finally he looked forward to 1988, when the Conference would be held in Brighton, in the sunny south of England, and then closed the 1987 Twenty-ninth Annual General Meeting of the Association.

The Chairman then wished all present a safe journey home, and looked forward to seeing them all again next year.

#### COMMITTEE NEWS

Dave Pulley, our Entries and Membership Secretary, writes :-

As you will have read in the last edition of News & Views, the Committee decided to buy a new computer to back up our existing one. We now have an

Amstrad PC1512. Those of you that know that we already have a Gemini computer might wonder how the two can communicate with each other, as they use different computer languages, but thanks to our Vice President, Roy Butcher we have a disk that enables the two systems to talk to each other. The reason we need another computer is that at the moment we use the Gemini for membership records, entries records, and computing the results of the Show. Computing the results of the Show has been done by two computers linked together; this is why the results are usually completed by 14.30 on Saturday. The second computer has in the past been supplied by Roy Butcher, who has lent his personal Gemini to NAWB at each Show. The Committee thought that we should have another computer in case Roy's was not available, or if either of the Geminis developed a fault.

While talking of Roy, it was he who took NAWB into the computer age by introducing a computer to calculate the results for the Show. He wrote the programs for the results, and later wrote the various programs that are used to run the Entries and Membership files. We owe Roy a great debt of gratitude for all his work and help, as any Entry and Membership Secretary will tell you.

This year the bottle labels for the Show will be computer produced. They are self-adhesive, and will have all details printed on them, so there will be no need to write any on them. The lower part of the label will still be covered so that the entrant's details will not be known until after judging. The labels themselves are yellow, so that even holding the bottle up to bright light you cannot see the details under the cover-up label. Details of how and where to stick the labels will be sent with the labels as usual. (Politely, I trust - Ed.)

This report was actually composed on the new computer.

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Tom McArthur reports that his telephone number was incorrectly shown in both News & Views and the Schedule; apologies, Tom. Should you need to ring him, then use the corrected number as shown on the inside cover of this issue.

While in apologetic mood, can I point out that the inside cover now shows the address for Roger Mitchell, our Supplies Officer, which has not been included before.

## CORRESPONDENCE

I received a most thought-provoking letter from Vin Crook, of Preston & District Wine Circle. After a couple of personal comments, he went on to say :-

"Enjoyed reading the National booklet you sent. With this in mind, I thought you might be interested in the following. I correspond with a winemaker in British Columbia (Canada), and she sends me copies of their 'Grapevine', which is published quarterly. The September issue tells that a home-brew supply firm, 'Wine Art' are offering a trophy in their National competition. The annual prize includes :- "ECONOMY FARE FOR TWO TO SAN FRANCISCO, HOTEL ACCOMMODATION FOR 6 NIGHTS, RENTAL CAR FOR THE DURATION OF THE TRIP, AND \$500 SPENDING MONEY." The 'Wine Art' Trophy will be awarded to the person who makes the best table wine from a 'Wine Art' grape juice concentrate."

"How about that?" Vin says. How indeed! Sounds like a cue for a song - "I left Wine Art, for San Francisco.....". Even the mighty Hidalgo Trophy pales into insignificance beside that sort of generosity. In fairness, I must remind our readers that eleven of our major suppliers support NAWB financially as Patrons -- and many give generously to prizes, awards, publicity, and tombolas and other fund-raising events throughout the hobby generally. Even so, a week in San Francisco.....that would do wonders for the rotten cold I'm sniffing through as I write this! Any offers?

Stan Baker writes regarding future venues:-

Having read in the 'News & Views' of November '87 that Blackpool has now been designated for the NAWB '89 Show, and as Scarborough was already planned as the 1990 venue, it seems that it is now worthwhile to consider the other venues in England and Wales which are sufficiently exciting to attract NAWB members to attend the annual Conference and Show.

George Lashbrook, at the '87 Annual General Meeting, expounded the possibilities of Torquay as a suitable NAWB conference venue, which I found most interesting. I attended the NAWB Show at Torquay several years ago

(1968 - Ed.); the weather was sunny and warm, and the seaside resort looked most attractive. The streets of Torquay are somewhat hilly and not all the hotels are sited near the sea, but energetic NAWB members such as Celia Scottow should be able to "take an early morning stroll along the beach." Facility costs at Torquay may be high, but as George Lashbrook pointed out in 'News & Views' "You only get what you pay for." Retired members may see the increased costs as a heavy financial blow, but the final decision must rest with the NAWB Committee; the annual wine weekend must not become a financial loss.

Cities and towns such as Liverpool, Wigan, Bradford, Halifax, Doncaster, Newcastle, Gateshead, Sheffield, Corby and Hull are, according to a recent newspaper article, "buzzing with new enterprise". Butlins, who provided three NAWB venues of the past, have a £100 million investment programme, and although some NAWB members would prefer to spend the weekend "outside of a mass catering establishment", the procedure of having 'day passes' into the holiday camps could again be adopted.

One of the most ambitious new projects is the £34 million Center Parc complex at Sherwood Forest, near Nottingham, and although it is a NAWB policy not to visit venues too frequently, the fact that Center Parc offers an all-in weekend break for as little as £43 is worth considering. First hand information from local NAWB members would be most welcome. I think that people need a motivation to visit an 'unknown' region of England and Wales, but I imagine that many NAWB members would like to visit new venues. Incidentally, I thought that Llandudno was a most pleasant seaside resort. The (Canolfan) Centre was too small for NAWB, but I believe that they have built a larger one, so Llandudno should also be considered as a NAWB venue of the future.

Stan Baker

The following letter from Bob Marsdon not only gives some interesting background regarding one of the larger shows in the country, but is the first step towards a calendar of events, that circle and Federation Secretaries might find helpful in arranging their future programmes and avoiding clashing with other events that wish to share the same dates.



# The Middlesex Federation of Wine & Beer Making Clubs

MIDDLESEX WINEMAKERS FESTIVAL

*Please Reply to:*

121, Windmill Lane, ,,  
Greenford,  
Middlesex UB6 ODZ.

Dear Roy,

There has been much talk recently, about holding The National Conference in, or around London. The nearest our National Show has been held to the capital, was in 1961 when thanks to the efforts of the late Ben Turner, the 3rd National Conference was held at Harrow, in the County of Middlesex.

The success of that "National", prompted nine clubs in the County of Middlesex, to form themselves into a federation of winemaking clubs. These clubs, namely Enfield, Greenhill, Harrow, Hesa, Hounslow, Southall, Staines, Twickenham, and Wembley, decided to hold an annual Festival of Winemaking. Later, with the Exchequer altering the laws on home brewing, beermaking was included.

Thus it is, that in 1988, The Middlesex Federation of Wine & Beer Making Clubs, will be holding their 25th Festival of Winemaking & Brewing within the Middlesex Show at Uxbridge, on 25th-26th June.

It was just 3 years ago, that the Middlesex Federation, with their belief in the concept of the continuance of the County of Middlesex, accepted an invitation to become an inaugural part of the Middlesex Show, whilst still retaining their own autonomy.

This Festival is now probably the largest wine and beermaking competition in the land - under canvas ! So if you reside in the Home Counties, why not enter some wines/beers and enjoy a wonderful day at the Middlesex Show, too ? The proximity of the M25 to the Uxbridge Show Ground, makes travelling to the 25th Middlesex Festival of Winemaking & Brewing simplicity itself. Providing you have motorist transport of course!

Exhibits are judged on Saturday morning, (like The National, exclusively by members of the N.G.W.B.J.) Sunday sees the gathering of the clans, as affiliated clubs man their stands, and hopefully encourage the public to take up our fascinating hobby. Schedules will be available from Mr. Dave Martin, 11a, Wilfred Road, Hampton Hill Middlesex TW12 1AL. when published.

*Bob Marsdon*

Bob Marsdon, (P.R.O. Middlesex Federation)

## WINE AND FOOD...STAN BAKER

Choosing wine to match food, or food to match wine, may be a relatively new vogue in the British Isles, but in some parts of Europe the sensory pleasure of harmonious pairing of wine and food has long been a part of everyday life.

It was some two hundred or more years ago that European settlers, including the British, planted vines in newly discovered lands so that the pioneers who had to endure very primitive living conditions could enjoy wine with their feasts. Today the general standard of living in most countries is good, and wine and food has become part of the culture. Much of the credit for this goes to a new wave of settlers in the United States, Australia and New Zealand, who own vineyards and restaurants that have reached an international standard of quality. Japan and China are also taking an interest, and English 'wine and dine' experts are usually employed on a contract basis.

Learning the art of wine and dine can be expensive, but it need not be. Restaurant owners have said that there was little profit in specialist cooking for a few people and imposed a mark-up on the wines which was often 100% above the wholesale price. Competition is much fiercer now that more people are taking up wine and dine as a business, and the customer is now getting better value for money. T V programmes on wine and food are very popular, and books on cooking in different styles such as Indian, Italian, etc. are in demand, so it is evident that many people are interested in wine and dine at home.

Some wine and dine writers are really way out, and suggest wines and menus that are way above the pockets of most people. Enthusiasts are encouraged to experiment with spices and seasonings, and this can mean problems for people who have little spare cash, as palates begin to outmatch the purse. Spicy foods need to be complimented with wines of character and this means that the the home-made wines in the 'cellar' may need adjusting to be suitable. Flavourings may be added to wine to increase complexity, but I am not sure that 'maturing agents' are always effective. Initially it may be advisable to prepare simple foods so that they harmonise with less complex home-made wines. For a very special occasion one may consider the purchase

of a bottle of quality commercial wine to be worthwhile.

People learn most through experiment, and one of the cheapest and simplest experiments is to assess wine with cheese. Haut cuisine suggests that sweet wines such as port pair best with cheese, and these need to be cheeses of character such as soft blue cheese; but even these do not always harmonise. The French often finish off their red wines during the cheese course, but Egon Ronay in a Sunday Times article states that "....coupling all cheeses with red wine is a world wide fallacy. Many are better with white, though to choose the right red wine with a cheese is very tricky. Experimenting is the answer."

A simple wine and cheese evening among friends, or at the local winemaking club, can produce some surprising results. Winemakers who usually agree on the quality, or otherwise, of a wine may have widely differing opinions when comparing wines with cheeses. It's a good fun evening, not to be taken too seriously.

Egon Ronay, as an expert, does take wine and dine very seriously. In his article headed "Decanting the taster's dogma" he "lambasts the experts who sample food without wine in a pointless ritual of nose burying and sipping." Much of Egon Ronay's comments have an element of truth when one is dealing with commercial wines. Most commercial wines have already been vetted by subjective or scientific methods, and usually one only noses the wine to detect oxidation or corkiness caused by bad storage. National Judges, in their annual task of assessing the home-made wines exhibited at the National, need to go through the accepted ritual of "seeing, sniffing, sipping, and spitting" to ensure that defective wines are eliminated at an early stage, and ensuring that their palates are reasonably fresh when the final assessment takes place.

Nearly all commercial wines are produced so that they complement food, but many home-made wines are styled so that they are acceptable on social occasions, that is, without food. Excess acid or tannin in wines are more acceptable when the wine is drunk with food, but as Egon Ronay points out, the interaction of food and wine does affect flavours. To my way of thinking, very expensive wines of quality should be savoured without the presence of food in the mouth, so in this sense I am in favour of the accepted ritual at most tastings of commercial wines.

Egon Ronay offers several useful ideas on experimenting with wine and food so that one is freed from the traditional white and red areas of demarcation. Experimenting with different wines and food is now encouraged in some restaurants in France, where the proprietors assemble friends with well-trying palates for trying out new creations.

During a recent visit to France I had the pleasure of enjoying food of three-star standard, but the free wine (unusual for France) was limited to a demi-litre carafe of white, red, or rosé. After experimenting with first the white and then the red, I finally chose the rosé for the remainder of the main meals. Being just off-dry, the rosé paired well with the fish, meat, and cheese courses, and when sweetened up with sugar, was ideal with the sweet courses.

Food has always played a secondary rôle at NAWB's annual get-together. After all, NAWB is a wine and beer-making association. The original schedule was expanded to meet the increasing number of exhibits, sometimes more than 4000 bottles, and some of the popular wine classes were reaching horrendous proportions. The current NAWB schedule was mostly planned by Fred Forster, then NAWB Treasurer, some years ago, and has been amended from time to time as new trophies have been donated to the Association (or as needed - Ed.) Exhibitors who are wine and food buffs may be interested in a new class in the cookery section. It is for "a cold savoury dish for up to four people with the appropriate bottle of wine". Appropriate in this sense means a wine that harmonises with the food, but it could be that an experimental pairing may prove to be the winning combination.

The trophy which is presented to the winner of the wine and food class consists of a wine basket and two candleholders mounted on a solid mahogany base, so it is quite stable and may be used with advantage as a table centrepiece for those special wine and dine occasions. With the two candles lit and the room lights lowered, one may not be "Wining and dining at the Ritz" - but it's the next best thing!

Thank you for that article, Stan; who better to introduce the new Baker Wine & Dine Trophy (Class 60) ?

Janet Witherden has arranged for a new trophy from Ironmaster, for the Best Lager from a kit (Class 28). Gerry Sparrow has also given a trophy, for the General Steward with most points in the Show; there's plenty to compete for.

## NEWS AND VIEWS - THE FUTURE

My pleas for member's views on the Association's newsletter and its future and potential place in the hobby, following the closure of the "Winemaker" and "Practical Winemaking" magazines seem to have fallen largely on deaf (or at least, unhearing) ears. The great gap in the market appears to me to give NAWB great scope to expand, even if only by retaining as magazine purchasers those members who drop out each year because the National has moved out of convenient travelling range. The last issue of News & Views contained three comments on this topic - everything I had received as Editor, and one of those was from a Dutch non-member! - so I can't complain I have been overwhelmed with members views and bright ideas. My indefatigable correspondent, Stan Baker says :-

Personally I like the current format of News and Views. Having spent many years in the world of print I appreciate that the folded A4 size is easy to handle and to file, but more important, it is inexpensive to originate and can be printed by one of the cheapest methods in the world.

Regarding content, the two most important requirements are news items and reader's viewpoints. Not every reader is going to be interested in everything that is published but at least they will have been informed. Viewpoints should stimulate interest and hopefully readers will reply, thus helping to fill up Roy's extra space. The world of wine and beer never stands still, and though I had thought originally that there would be little to write about in terms of new methods and new ingredients, Roy's write-up in the June issue proved otherwise.

I do not agree with Roy's suggestion that writers should be paid for their contributions. (Only suggested in despair! - Ed.) They contribute because they have opinions which they wish to express, and if their comments were critical they wouldn't really expect to receive payment. Roy's idea of printing a few extra copies is a good one. Aging NAWB members who for one reason or another are unable to attend the Nationals would welcome the opportunity to buy a copy so as to keep in touch. Roy's suggestion that copies should be sold to non-NAWB members via Circles and Federations is also worth considering.

As long as News and Views is only published three or four times a year, it can never replace "Winemaker" or the other wine and beer magazines that are no longer published, but it could prove to be a very interesting publication. Dates of future shows would be welcome information, for example, and there must be other items of interest to people in the movement. News and Views has great potential - it just needs a little effort by NAWB members. Stan Baker

## POET'S CORNER

Roy Alliver has returned to 'News & Views, not with the original work I had hoped for after his long absence, but with a series of parodies. Here are some of his

## "SLIMY RHYMES FOR ZYMURGERS"

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Old King Cole was a merry old soul,  
 And frequently merry was he,  
 "Three pounds of sugar to the gallon" he said,  
 And he died alcoholicallee

=====

Hey diddle diddle,  
 The Cat and the Fiddle,  
 The Cow jumped over the Moon.  
 And if you put L S D in your ferments  
 You'll be in a padded cell soon!

=====

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,  
 Humpty Dumpty had a great fall,  
 All the King's Vintners and Brewerymen  
 Collected the egg-white for finings.

Amen

Jack and Jill went up the hill  
 To fetch a pail of water,  
 They took with them some home-made wine-  
 - Now they've a bouncing daughter!

=====

Hickory Dickory Dock,  
 The Mice fell in the crock,  
 Sad to say,  
 They dissolved away,  
 So we strained out the bones through a sock

=====

Critics of Alliver's works have commented on the general change in standard and attitude of his poetry over the last twenty-five years. This has been variously attributed to his unhappy extra-marital affairs (his wife won't let him have one), liver degeneration, his failure to obtain an Oxford professorship, or even a night-school class at Runcorn, or finally, to the change over from coal gas to North Sea gas. Seemingly, natural gas is unsuitable for bubbling through cheap red wine to make Red Bidy, of which our Poet Laureate is an acknowledged connoisseur. Alliver is reported to have invented a new variation on Red Bidy, by blending some rough old elderberry with butane gas, and adding a snort of glue to enhance the bouquet. This concoction was eventually abandoned, as he and his tasting panel found that after a deep sniff at the wine, the glass usually fell through their helpless fingers. Pewter pots and silver goblets were tried, to overcome the high breakage rate, but unfortunately the wine frequently corroded holes in the containers, to the vast annoyance of the auctioneers from whom they had been surreptitiously borrowed.

Alliver is currently reported to be working on a rhyming history of the great berries found in our hobby's literature - elder, black, dingle, and Cyril are obvious examples

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Because of the need to give adequate notice to you of the AGM, most of the copy for 'News & Views' was prepared and given to our printers before the Executive Committee meeting on the 7th February. Here is the latest news, from the horse's mouth!

On Saturday afternoon at the National, Judith Irwin will be giving a talk and a tasting of Bulgarian wines, probably eight wines including the latest 'Reserve' wines - a tasting you must not miss! Admission will be by production of a commemorative tasting glass, as for the Sainsburytasting last year. The glasses will be on sale at the NAWB table all weekend, at £1 each. As well as giving free access to this tasting, these fine Savoy goblets, screen printed with the NAWB emblem and 'Brighton 1988L', will also be your permanent reminder of a memorable weekend. Why not buy half-a-dozen?

The Civic Reception and Ball tickets for Saturday night will not be available in time for them to be posted to you. PLEASE NOTE:- YOU MUST COLLECT THESE TICKETS FROM THE NAWB TABLE BEFORE SATURDAY EVENING. IF YOU DO NOT, YOU WILL NOT BE ADMITTED TO THE HALL. Collect your souvenir glasses, pay your subscriptions before they go up, buy a few extra Grand Draw tickets, and treat yourself or your beloved to a new badge, tie, etc. - all available at the NAWB table.

If you are interested in becoming a National Guild Judge, nearby there will be a table devoted to the National guild of Judges, the world's premier international body of Amateur Beer and Wine Judges.

Finally, PLEASE do volunteer to act as a steward, even if you can only spare an odd hour. Our Show is wholly run by volunteer members, and there is work to be done by somebody right through the weekend. and you will get a commemorative glass if you are a General Steward, or lots of invaluable instruction and comparative tastings if you are a Judges' Steward.