

NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF WINE AND BEERMAKERS
(Amateur)
NEWS AND VIEWS

March 1992



NAWB

President: Mrs. S. Hill
Vice-President: Mr. J. Chettle

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N A W B (A)

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WINE AND BEERMAKERS (AMATEUR)

NEWS & VIEWS

MARCH 1992

EDITORIAL

There's a very true old saying, and it's just about to be proved correct once more. What is this pearl of wisdom? Quite simply, "No one is indispensable".

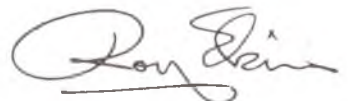
After eight years as Editor of 'News & Views' the time has come for me to bow out, gracefully or otherwise. My current three-year stint on the Executive Committee ends at this AGM. I shall not be standing for re-election, due to an assortment of personal reasons, and I leave the EC with great regret. I have always found my Committee colleagues vastly co-operative and unanimously prepared to work hard for NAWB, and I shall be very sorry to cease being a part of this extraordinary team.

So you can look forward to some fresh ideas, perhaps changes in production, or even a new look for the next copy of N & V. That will be up to the new Editor, within the EC's guidelines.

I offer my successor every good wish for the future, and would only ask one thing of our members: please do support him in his endeavours!

Blackpool will very soon be upon us, and I, like all the Officers and Committee members, hope to meet many of the other members there. It promises to be a great weekend, in this refurbished and redecorated marvellous old hotel, where the new owners seem anxious to meet our every wish. I'm looking forward to it, and hope you are too. It's not too late to book if you haven't already done so.

One last word - if you want to 'phone John Carpenter, use 0527 404722, and NOT 0527 318595 as shown in the Schedule, which is the number for some NAWB-afflicted lady non-member!



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1992

AGENDA

- 1/ The Meeting will be opened by the President of the Association, Mrs Sybil Hill
- 2/ Apologies for absence
- 3/ Minutes of the 1991 Annual General Meeting
- 4/ Matters arising from these Minutes
- 5/ Chairman's Report, 1991/92
- 6/ Treasurer's Report, 1990/91
- 7/ Election of members to the Executive Committee:
In accordance with the amended Rule 8(d), the following members having served three years will retire:
Mr G Sparrow
Mr B Edwards
Mr R Ekins
Mr D Ives

and in addition Mr R Redfearn will retire as a co-opted member.

Mr M Hayter having resigned during the year, there are five vacancies on the Executive Committee to be filled. The following four nominations have been received, duly proposed and seconded:

- Mr E Edwards
 - Mr G Sparrow
 - Mr R Redfearn
 - Mr J Gorton
- 8/ Any other business
 - 9/ Presentation of the Executive Committee
 - 10/ Date & venue of the 35th Annual Conference & Show.
 - 11/ The President will close the Meeting.

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WINE & BEERMAKERS (AMATEUR),
HELD AT PONTIN'S HOLIDAY VILLAGE, CAMBER SANDS,
AT 10.30 am, SUNDAY MARCH 24th, 1991**

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Roy Butcher, opened the Meeting. He said he had attended the National since 1963, and the main change had been the growth in the number of Trophies and Classes. This was our first visit to Camber; the accommodation was reasonable, as was the weather, and he was sure everyone had enjoyed themselves. He passed the Meeting to the Chairman, Mrs Judith Irwin, who called on Mr Lenn Drysdale, Hon. Secretary.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE had been received from Mrs J Burrow, Mr & Mrs Chiverton, Mr S Baker, Mr C Lucas, and Mr & Mrs J Tompkin.

MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM were proposed for acceptance, by Mr J Gorton, seconded by Mr D Reed, and accepted as a true record by those present.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Mrs Irwin said this was her third year as Chairman. Her first year's report had been 'ad libbed', she had not had time to prepare her second year's report, and this year she had done her homework in time. Attendance was down this year, and many members had missed a very good weekend, and an annual get-together to meet friends. She remarked we needed more ladies on the Committee, and then commenting on Camber, she said it was at least warmer than the holiday camp at Caister, which was part of NAWB's history. The whole country was suffering from the recession, and the Committee had been well aware of the need to economise. Expenses had been cut by reducing the EC Meetings

to three a year, and EC Members were encouraged to work on their own initiative. (Applause)

With regard to the future, we had difficulty in booking sufficient Judges. One possible solution was to hold elimination rounds, with only the winning wines going forward to the final at the National. Members were invited to write to News & Views to comment and put forward their own ideas. About a dozen Federations are members of NAWB, and they would be invited to supply copy for an issue of News & Views. Mr W E (Wally) Grainger was present, with the remarkable record of having judged at the National for 25 consecutive Shows. It was nice to see our older members: We hope to recruit a lot of new members too, hopefully to remain in NAWB for many years. The Chairman thanked: Mr & Mrs P Awbery for all the preparatory work they had done; the General Stewards, (and reminded them to collect their souvenir glasses and certificates); Mr & Mrs Chiverton. Unfortunately Sarah was in hospital at present, and we wished her well. Judith said it was probably her last year as Chairman, and she thanked all present for attending, and all members for their support during her term of office.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS The Treasurer, Mr M Hayter presented the Accounts for the year to 30 June 1990. 1989/90 had been a good year, closing with a surplus for the year of £1762.74. This was due to a variety of factors, mainly the rise in interest rates, increased subscriptions, and three new Patrons. A High-Interest account had been opened with Barclays Bank. Some venues are cheap for Conference, which gives us the chance to build up capital reserves, as a buffer against a bad year in the future. Notes to the Accounts were provided on a supplementary sheet.

Acceptance of the Accounts was proposed by Mr I Morgan, seconded by Mr D Reed, and approved by the Meeting.

Mr Hayter announced that there would be no change in the subscription rates, but everyone should endeavour to recruit new members.

ELECTIONS: Mr R Mitchell, retiring, did not wish to stand for re-election to the EC. Mr D Pulley and Mr P Johnson were due to retire, and were standing for re-election. Two nominations had been received, for Mr J Carpenter and Mr R Redfearn. On a ballot, Messrs Pulley, Johnson, and Carpenter were elected.

MOTIONS: Mr E Tappenden spoke in support of his Motion to introduce 110 ml 'Medical Flats' medicine bottles for the Liqueur Classes, and was supported by Mrs J Wright and Mr D Swift. Mr I Morgan, Mr R Marsdon, Mrs B Mallinson, Mr G Dickson, and Mr B Gent spoke against the Motion, which was lost on a show of hands.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

VENUES: Mr G Lashbrook pressed for the National to visit the South West, and gave cogent reasons to support his views.

SCHEDULES: Dr B Lamb asked for changes to make the Schedule notes match the Judges Handbook. Mr D Pulley said this had been done generally, but there had been an oversight in this instance. It was also suggested that the Table Wine classes for Grape wines should be extended or divided to allow entries of different types of grape, as several specific types of grape concentrate could now be purchased.

AGM TIMING: Mr A Procter asked if the AGM could start at 10 am in future, for the benefit of those with long journeys home. There was usually some delay if trophies had to be collected.

JUDGES & STEWARDS BRIEFING: Mr J Gorton asked if the Committee would consider holding the briefing in a separate room from the Show. He as a Judge found it very embarrassing this year when the Convenor could hardly be heard at times, due to the amount of background noise.

CIRCLES & FEDERATIONS REPRESENTATIVE: Mr B Edwards said that all Circles and Federations had had letters jointly from the Guild of Judges and NAWB, and he wished to record his appreciation of this co-operation. He asked that Circles and Federations should reply if they hadn't done so already, so their views could be made known to the EC.

PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT: The Chairman advised the Members that Mr Roy Butcher would complete his term of office as President at the end of the AGM. It was proposed that at that point Mrs Sybil Hill would become President, and Mr Jim Chettle Vice-President. All present in favour.

COMMITTEE

EXPENSES: The Chairman announced that the car mileage allowance had risen and fallen by 2p per mile during the year; it might prove necessary to increase it again after the Chancellor's Budget.

PRESENTATION: Mrs Irwin then introduced each serving member of the Executive Committee to the Members, explaining the duties of each, and thanking them and their ladies for their support and help during the last year.

NEXT CONFERENCE: The Chairman announced that Conference will next be held at the refurbished Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool, on April 10-12, 1992. We had been quoted £21.50 per day, Bed & Breakfast, and £29.50 including evening meal. These figures included VAT at the old rate, and would need adjustment. Single rooms carried a £4 surcharge.

CLOSE OF AGM: The retiring President then thanked Mrs Irwin very much for everything she had done. He intimated that she had been a strong Chairman, giving positive leadership to the Association over the last three years, and he called on the Members for a vote of thanks.

This had been our first visit to Camber, and he thanked the management and staff for their help and encouragement. He then asked the Past Presidents present (Messrs K Hill and P Awbery) to stand, as he handed over the President's chain of office to Mrs Hill. He knew that the new President and Vice-President were much involved in Wine Circles, and hoped the EC would keep them informed of their deliberations.

Mr Butcher then formally closed the Meeting.

The new President took the opportunity of briefly addressing the members before they dispersed. She thanked the retiring President for his good wishes. Mrs Hill said she had been a member of NAWB since 1961, and had served for many years on the Executive Committees of both NAWB and the NGWBJ. She promised to do all she could as President to keep NAWB flourishing.

STOP PRESS

You may have heard that PRINCIPAL HOTELS, of which the NORBRECK CASTLE HOTEL is a member, were in the hands of the Receiver. This was purely a voluntary and temporary measure, during the regrouping of the companies involved. We have been assured by the Norbreck that all bookings are being honoured in full, new business is currently being sought, and the Hotel is continuing to operate normally.

Our bookings for April 10-12th will be honoured as arranged, and we look forward to seeing you in Blackpool for yet another excellent National weekend Show and Conference.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

I have often in the past implored members to send in contributions to News & Views, and I am sure our next Editor will be just as persistent in his or her appeals. Please do support your own magazine.

So you won't know until the new Editor sends out the next News & Views just who the new Editor is? That's no excuse for not contributing! Just send it to me, or ring me, as soon as you can, and your valuable help will certainly be passed on to my successor. Tell him what you thought about Blackpool, or why, if from choice, you chose not to come; tell him about the things that interested or delighted you, or made you split your sides laughing. Tell him or her anything, but for Heaven's sake do tell him something!



Roy Ekins

H E L P !

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED GIVING A HAND AT BLACKPOOL, IF ONLY FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS, OR FOR A MORE EXTENDED PERIOD?

WE DO NEED MORE STEWARDS!

Setting up tables - putting bottles out - taking entries - selling raffle tickets - selling tombola tickets - collecting and checking entries out when the show closes - clearing away NAWB equipment - setting up the trophy display - and all the other essential things that make your show a success.

WHATEVER WAY YOU CAN HELP, WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO ACCEPT YOUR OFFER. WOULD YOU PLEASE CONTACT ME AT THE ADDRESS IN THE FRONT OF NEWS & VIEWS.

**BRIAN H EDWARDS
CHIEF STEWARD**

And on a different note, Stan Baker sends us some views on wine judging at amateur and commercial competitions:

FOR NEWS AND VIEWS

"Amateur" and "Professional" in the minds of many wine buffs indicates a significant difference in standards. But this is by no means correct; there are some very poor commercial wines marketed and some very good home made wines.

Possibly the most marked difference between home made and commercial wine production is in the method of assessment. Commercial wines are, almost without exception, assessed by a panel of judges in quiet, uncrowded conditions; the ambient air temperature being ideal for the assessment of both white and red wines.

Home made wines, exhibited at shows, are often assessed in less suitable conditions and the final assessment is made by an individual judge; not a "committee" decision by a panel of judges. The commercial approach invariably attracts less criticism from exhibitors.

Wines, whether commercial or home made, differ in character as well as quality. Top quality red table wines from Burgundy are considered by all wine buffs to be "dry" - that is lacking in sugar; but a good typical red Burgundy has a nutty sweetness on the end palate. Inexpert amateurs could consider this to be a sweet wine. Understanding the character of different wines requires a long, wide, experience.

Beginners to home wine making mostly follow recipes or make single ingredient wines that suit their palates. Advanced winemakers should develop their sensory range by blending wines and formulating their own recipes. Upgrading a product from a single ingredient, usually one dimensional wines into a multi - "ingredient" complex wines means an investment in money as well as time. In commercial terms this means an increase in the price of the product; to the customer greater

attention to the conditions in which the wine is assessed.

Multi "layered", complex wines - be they red or white - require a longer "breathing" time in the glass to attain their optimum levels of bouquet and flavour. Regretably, time is a commodity in short supply at most amateurs shows; judges often have to assess a large number of entries.

It would be fairer for exhibitors with long winemaking experience if blended wines were given a higher degree of priority at Wine Shows. Judges should be provided with, at least, adequate bench and work space so that, several wines can be poured into goblet type glasses and allowed to breathe until they show of their best - or their worst. Minor defects are often only detectable after long breathing; similarly the most subtle qualities of good wines are only revealed when volatility is at its optimum.

Finalisation of large classes by a panel of judges instead of an individual judge would attract less criticism from experienced exhibitors. Similarly to the commercial approach it could be that two, three, four or even five amateur palates are better than one.

Stan Baker

As this is an important topic, I invited one of our Founder members, with many past years of Committee service, who is also President of the National Guild of Judges, Mr Ivor Morgan, to reply to Stan Baker's letter.

He replied:

Dear Roy,

My comments to Stan Baker's letter follow:

Re his first paragraph, he is absolutely correct. However, his later paragraphs call for some comment.

I assume he (Stan Baker) is referring to "competitions" in his second paragraph, and I have no personal knowledge of the "trade assessment" for purchase/sale assessment. However, having been privileged to be a member of the judging panel for the Concours International des Vins, associated with Vinexpo, on three occasions, the Wine Magazine Challenge in London this year, and on several occasions the Concours des Coteaux du Layon at St Aubin du Lugine, I regret to say that Stan is wrong!

The first is held in a Gymnasium, a huge modern hall with a part-glazed roof, in mid-June. It becomes very warm, with several hundred judges sitting at trestle tables cheek by jowl with each other. Other facilities - one glass each, the spittoon is a dustbin, and bottled water.

The second, London, held in an unfinished block of shops in the London docks Resettlement area. Equipment - one glass, trestle table, no chairs, spittoon a box of sawdust, and bottled water.

The third, at St Aubin - bliss! A newly reconstructed ancient hall, cool (in July), airy, just five tables with white cloths,, nice chairs, spittoons - ice buckets; bottled water, baskets of bread, and one glass, which you were asked not to take away (Pity, they were rather nice!).

I must say we do better at home, and we also get expenses and sometimes lunch. In France, no expenses, often you pay for your lunch (but what a lunch!) and normally a bottle or two of wine. But the privilege of being in the company of so many good and experience is ample recompense.

Final assessment: all wines are judged by juries of up to six persons, sometimes the wines are judged twice by two different panels, and in the case of St Aubin, the top bottles are reassessed by a third panel. This would be very difficult to

arrange here, as we cannot call on the services of sufficient judges, and the time factor would make it impossible, not to mention the number of bottles required to operate such a system.

The next paragraph I agree with entirely.

To the final paragraph, beginners have to follow known routes; it is only with experience they formulate their own recipes. Expense hardly comes into consideration; experienced winemakers blend from their stocks, including the commercial producers. Most purchasers do not know how the wine has been assessed, and probably care less - price and name (including an attractive label) are foremost, plus the knowledge of whatever their friends are drinking!

Cheers,



Cyril Lucas sent the following letter, but he thought the contents might be "a bit too ancient". Perish the thought!

WINEMAKING WORLD

Do any of the older generation of winemakers remember the BBC "Tonight" programme shown at 6.05 pm, following the News, from about 1957 to 1965, and presented by Cliff Michelmore? The team of reporters included Fyfe Robertson, Derek Hart, Alan Whicker and several others.

Recently reading a book by Alan Whicker' on his experiences as a member of the "Tonight" team, I came across the following:

"We reported on the winemakers of Whitchurch in Hampshire - enthusiasts who brought their finest vintages into Andover², spread them around us and enthused. Normally when we finished

filming and said "Wrap!" our crew would be heading for home within minutes. That night, as merry winemakers urged us to finish everything in sight, they settled back bravely to do their best. The wine, which we learned could be made out of anything, was insidious."

I remember seeing the programme during the summer of 1957. Later in the same year a meeting for mead- and wine-makers was held at the Hampshire Farm Institute. Amongst the speakers were Commander Mudie and Cyril Berry, who had recently founded the Andover Wine Circle.

Commander Mudie stressed how simple it was to make wine and Cyril Berry described how the founding of the Andover Circle took place and how much the members enjoyed their benefits of belonging to an association where the members all had the same interests.

There is little doubt that the "Tonight" programme, which brought home winemaking to the notice of vast numbers of people, was responsible for the national upsurge. I believe that it was the first programme broadcast on the subject.

The Hampshire Farm Institute meeting resulted in the formation of several wine circles in the south: New Forest, Bournemouth, Farnborough and Southampton among others. Interest tended to spread from Hampshire to cover the South and the London area with the North following later. Media interest has ranged from TV coverage by Donald Milner of the 1961 Harrow National Conference to both radio and TV programmes on winemaking.

1 "Within Whicker's World" An autobiography by Alan Whicker, Elm Tree Books 1982.

2 Actually the Andover Winemakers visited Witchurch.

Cyril Lucas

Being Editor of News & Views does occasionally bring a rare bonus that makes it all worthwhile. I have recently been privileged to read the manuscript of a so-far unpublished book on wine and amateur winemaking by that renowned veteran of the Wales and West, John Toule, NGWBJ. It is a fascinating and very personal account, and John has kindly allowed me to reproduce his chapter on the National Association for your delight. This will definitely go into NAWB's Archives!

THE NATIONAL

The modern winemaking movement had its origin in the early 1950's. You will remember that in those days we were still suffering the aftermath of World War II and many things were still in short supply - furniture, petrol, houses, and notably sugar. Sugar did not come off the ration until 1953 and it was only then that winemaking became really practicable. Some people had made a little wine during the war using honey or Golden Syrup but for the majority of people the lack of sugar had been a bar.

So in 1953, many people and "Young Marrieds" who had never made wine before, started dabbling in this hobby, including Cyril Berry. He had been dabbling in the hobby since 1947 following his country-bred family. By 1953 he was more enthusiastic than ever. At the time he was Editor of the "Andover Advertiser" and through an article he wrote in that paper, contacted the local enthusiasts. He arranged a meeting and to his astonishment, more than thirty people turned up. Amongst these were Commander Mudie and Mr Fred Greathead. The upshot was that the Andover Wine Circle was formed. This was the first Wine Circle in England, indeed in the World. It was followed a few months later by Welwyn Garden City, Hertford and many others.

The title of "Circle" was chosen as being democratic (rather like Rotary or Round Table), in preference to the title of "Society, Association" or "Guild" which were suggested but "Circle" was adopted and other clubs followed. They had a great time drawing up the rules for exhibiting and for competitions and these later formed the basis for the National Rules. It was the Andover Circle which first decided that the Bordeaux white bottle should be the standard for competitions and that the stopper cork (now abandoned in favour of the white plastic-topped cork), should be the standard closure. When one refers to a "Great time" it will be realised that the meetings of Wine Circle organisers were accompanied by vast quantities of home made wine.

By 1957 there were a dozen or so Clubs, and being in the newspaper business, Cyril Berry founded the "Amateur Winemaker", price six pence, eight pages and a circulation of 200. By the 1980's the circulation was many thousands but sadly when Cyril Berry retired the publishing firm who took it over abandoned it in favour of more profit-making subjects.

What was not foreseen was that the growth of Winemaking Clubs mushroomed. In turn the magazine prospered and in the 1970's the circulation reached a peak of 45,000. It was also selling in America, New Zealand, and the Netherlands. In Britain, the number of winemaking Clubs exceeded 1300.

But in 1959 there were only 20 or so Clubs. There had been suggestions of a National "Get together" and in the previous year, the Welsh winemakers had tried unsuccessfully to arrange one at Cardiff. The Andover Circle grasped the nettle and arranged a National meeting in 1959 at Andover. It was quite a small affair but a huge success. A dozen or so Clubs took part, about 150 bottles were exhibited and about the same number of people attended. Following this, there was a demand that the idea should be continued and the following year, the

Bournemouth Circle "Took up the torch". It was largely due to the vision and ability of one of their members, Cyril Lucas, who had experience with the National Honey Show, that this event became a much more ambitious affair with 600 bottles entered and about the same number of visitors.

At both these events there had been suggestions of forming a National organisation and members, but those present voted firmly against having a list of members. It must be remembered that the licensing situation was very unclear in those days. However everyone present wished the show to continue and therefore Cyril Berry was elected as Chairman and later President, an office which he held for twelve years.

C.J Berry then gathered together a Committee consisting of himself as Chairman, S.W. (Andy) Andrews of Hertford as Vice Chairman, R.C. Lucas of Bournemouth as Secretary, Dr R.A. Webb of Long Ashton, B.C.A. Turner of Harrow, L. Gilbertson of Cardiff, E.A. Malin of Bishops Cleeve, W. Martin of Farnborough, and I. Morgan of New Forest. Many other distinguished winemakers joined the Committee in subsequent years. but these were the Founders in 1961 of the present National.

Later, the committee, in order to boost finances, introduced the system of individual membership in addition to the Circle membership. This has continued ever since, but it caused some controversy at the time. Many of the Circles and Federations objected strongly to the idea of individuals having the same say as themselves and the 'Association of Federations' was formed in the early seventies. This ceased to exist after a few years and many members of the Committee joined the National Committee.

Under the guidance of the Committee, the National expanded with almost frightening rapidity to its present 3000-4000

bottle size and complexity. It was because of the problem of Judging such a large entry of bottles that in 1963, largely at the suggestion of Ben Turner, that a meeting was held at Cyril Berry's house and the Guild of Judges was formed. Andy Andrews the Vice Chairman of the National became the first Chairman of the Guild of Judges, to maintain close relations with the National.

The National Association of Amateur Winemakers continued to prosper and is now over 30 years old. The annual Conference and National winemaking competition has been held annually at different venues up and down the country. It is usually held in the Town Hall of the chosen venue. The venues have diversified between the Counties of Yorkshire, Lancashire, North Wales, the Midlands, Sussex, Hampshire, and East Anglia. Holiday camps have been used and so have residential Universities, but for one reason or another, normal town facilities have been favoured. One thing remains constant and that is the great classless fraternity which exists between winemakers up and down the country.

Let's hope you find a publisher soon, John, so we can all enjoy the rest of your book. Look out for 'STAR BRIGHT', by John Toule, on the bookstalls some day!

ALLIVER IN BLACKPOOL

Our members will soon gyre and gimble
 'Neath the Tower, that huge phallic symbol.
 And the men, so inspired,
 Will never be tired,
 And their wives won't half need to be nimble!

ESPECIALLY FOR FEDERATION AND CLUB OFFICERS

Brian Edwards writes:

Further to my letter to all member Federations and Circles of NAWB(A) I have received varied and interesting replies.

It seems that a majority of Federations and Circles are happy if their contact names and addresses are circulated to other Circles, Federations, National Guild of Judges and the Trade that is connected with our hobby, when a request is made to us.

Naturally only those organisations given permission are being circulated. Circles and Federations on our membership list are on computer and must not be circulated without that member's permission.

Please let me know if you change your contact name and address so that I may keep our records up to date. Circles and Federations requiring information, please contact me.

The second part of my letter asked you to let me have ideas on how the NAWB(A) can help your Organisation. I was disappointed on how few replies I received. This may indicate that you are happy with what you received from NAWB(A) or a feeling that there's not much that we can do for you.

Thank you to those that did reply by letter, phone, or discussion when I attended your Federation function.

Here is a resumé of the replies:

1/ News & Views to cover a wider range of topics and presented more like the now defunct wine magazines.

2/ Half year get-together in the Autumn, possibly with Commercial Tasting or an informative talk or could be held in conjunction with one of the Federation Functions.

3/ Federations and Circles to elect Members to Committee by say 3 Regions, ie 3 Club Representatives, 3 Federation Representatives, and reduce the Committee by 6 individual members to be spread over a three year run-in.

4/ Classes should be set aside for only Clubs and Federations to enter. (Note the Clubs now have a separate section).

5/ A reduction in Membership costs for bulk Membership applications from Federations applying for a number of Clubs or Clubs applying for a number of individual members.

Would Federations and Circle Representatives please make themselves known to me during the Blackpool Show so that any ideas you may have can be talked through.

The Committee members are always interested to have your views so we may serve our hobby to the best advantage.

Brian H Edwards

Federation & Circle Representative

PS: If your Federation or Circle has not received a copy of the letter due to recently becoming a member or maybe overlooked a reply. Please drop me a line or phone and I will send out a copy. BHE

May I as a retiring Committee Member, and thus with no axe to grind, comment on a few of these suggestions? Editor. :-

1/ I wholeheartedly agree; this is something I have advocated for years! Are you going to put up the subs so the Editor can pay contributors? Or can the Editor suddenly start receiving a lot of free articles from YOU?

2/ Another jolly good idea! What a pity nobody would support it when we tried to arrange such a weekend in the Midlands about three years ago.

3/ Why? This is leading towards a three-tier organisation, which would establish NAWB in the public eye as a representative body for the hobby, but which very few of the members will support, for fear of losing their own authority within their Federations etc. Why reduce Individual members on Committee? They far outnumber Federations and Circles and pay the same subscriptions, so should have the majority vote. The membership has already disposed of the election of separate Circle and Federation representatives - why try and put the clock back?

4/ Read your Schedule! See Classes 43, 44, and 47 to 56 inclusive.

5/ Another good idea - but only if Circles and Federations pay a subscription on a per capita basis for the number of Circles and Individuals they represent. And that would be another exciting step towards a three-tier organisation to represent the hobby - but who would be willing to pay for it? If a sufficiently high subscription was fixed, we could then consider discounts! In the last NAWB accounts, subs brought in approximately £4845 - say £4800 as a round sum, far below what we need. With about a dozen Federations, that averages £4000 apiece, for you certainly won't get many individual members paying a full sub. if they can get away with a few bob as a Circle member instead! The biggest Federation has only about 100 member Circles, so they will pay £40 each.....and all the smaller Federations with around 30 Circles will have to charge them about £130 each! Say £3 per capita of their membership! For what? Membership of a National organisation that can speak for the hobby as a whole - a good point. But for that they will have to pay for News & Views if they want

FERMENTATION

The Magazine for the Wine and Beer Maker

Subscription Form

Please commence my yearly subscription as from for 1 year
(4 quarterly issues at £5.00 inc P&P)

Payment enclosed to: **John Carpenter Fermentation,**
110 Heathfield Road, Webheath, Redditch, Worcs. B97 5RD
Telephone : Redditch (0527) 404722

Name Circle

Address

County..... Post Code

10% Discount for 10 or more copies of each issues

No. of copies

it. £1600 didn't cover 800 copies per issue, and costs and postage have risen since then, If members wanted copies of News & Views, they would have to pay at least another £5 per head per year as a magazine subscription, to get the sort of magazine they would want (see 1/ above).

I am sorry if this seems a defeatist viewpoint, but there are unfortunately hard commercial and legal facts that have to be faced. For News & Views to have been launched as a commercial venture, this should have been been three or four years ago, when I first mooted the idea. Since then the free paper "Homebrew Today" has grown considerably in its distribution, and "Fermentation" magazine has been introduced, filling the gap in the market News & Views could have occupied.

NAWB under its present Constitution must have all types of members, without giving special concessions to any class of members. To change NAWB in such a way as to allow some of these suggestions to be implemented must, in my view, require a complete revision of the Constitution and Rules, and this is not a thing to be lightly undertaken - especially as the majority, who are Individual Members, would probably strongly oppose any Motions designed to reduce their standing or to give concessions to other Members.

The Association must evolve as time passes, and I personally would be delighted to see NAWB eventually end up as a truly representative body for all amateur home wine and beer makers. But the founding fathers of what was 'The Amateur Winemakers Annual Conference' made it clear in 1961 that the Committee was elected solely to run an annual National Show, and not to set up as the overall controlling or governing body for the hobby; this was to be left to the Regions to organise for themselves. And as far as I know, there has been no official change of aims or viewpoint in the last thirty years. It will be a brave man or woman who undertakes radically to change the present situation.



Roy Ekins

(wearing his Archivist's hat).

And now the first part of an article by Peter Awbery, on growing fruit for winemaking. We can all buy the odd tray of soft fruit at the market, or grow a few casual crabapples or some rudimentary rhubarb, but how do you grow top quality fruit, reliably and profusely, year after year? Peter gives his expert knowledge on soil makeup in this instalment, to be followed by articles on a wide range of gardening topics.

GROWING WINES, OTHER THAN VINES

When one considers the growing medium and temperate zones of the majority of vineyards, it is evident that vines grow in a somewhat exacting environment.

As Amateur Winemakers we are often gardeners with a far wider range of soils to contend with, and so it was with this in mind that I put this paper together.

I hope to put to you various options you have to improve the fruits of your labours and this I trust will have good influences on your production of wine. I am certain that as Amateur Winemakers we are all convinced that the value of the Flower, Fruit, or Vegetable is of paramount value to the potential of the wine.

Certain acknowledgements are very necessarily due , and I give these with grateful thanks: to Prof. Gerry Fowles for much of the winemaking input; to many of the anonymous writers of various Min. of Agriculture leaflets; to many Gardeners including the late Fred Streeter, who was one of so many who used the motto "The answer lies in the soil"; and finally, to experience, via many a backache!

SOIL

Soil is basically a mixture of many ingredients, amongst which one may find Stones, Sand, Silt, Clay, Chalk, Humus, Organic materials, Plant foods, Bacteria, Fungi, Air spaces, Water, and to a lesser degree, of Insects and Animals and their products.

Your soil may be more like a back-breaking clay, a hungry sandy mix, or one so high with visible chalk that you would be able to supply chalk for all of the nearby schools. This of course says nothing of the possibilities of finding brickends, broken lintels, and discarded concrete blocks, if you happen to have moved recently into a newly-built house.



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However, with the proper cultivation regime, with the correction of the pH values and with the correct application of nutrients and humus, the topsoil layer can be modified to bring the topsoil much nearer to the ideal.

The ideal soil will have a humus content available for plant use within the topsoil. This will be composed of plant, insect, and animal remains that have been gradually decomposed within the soil, and have been carried downwards by the action of weather, worms, and insects. Millions of bacteria will further break down the remains and eventually the humus will be available for plant use.

If use is made of fresh lawn mowings, of fresh straw, of fresh farmyard manure, or unmade compost materials, the composting action will take place within the soil structure and the nitrogen necessary for this action will be taken from the

soil. This then is why it is important to replace the used nitrogen if this course of action is carried out. When composting action is carried out via compost heaps, nitrogen needs to be added in one form or another - this can be via sulphate of ammonia. Should your method also include the use of occasional quantities of lime this should be separated from the sulphate of ammonia by a layer of fresh composting material or a layer of soil.

The materials available for the enrichment of the topsoil include compost, peat, FYM, seaweed, shoddy, spent hops, and ex-mushroom compost. The material that has been composted correctly will contain the nutrients that will speedily be available for the plant. Leaves make a good humus; if only small quantities are available these should be incorporated within the compost heap; if large quantities are available, then a separate container should be made of wire netting.

Whatever the source of material for humus, it is worthwhile carrying out a test to identify the pH value of the material. This will give some indication if the compost will have an acidification effect when added to the soil.

(Peter's insights into the finer points of running an efficient fruit garden will be continued in later editions of News & Views, if the new Editor concurs).

ALLIVER'S GARDENER'S GUIDE NO. 1

There was a fruit-grower from Kent

Whose rhubarb grew spirally bent

He said each sideways crown

Was put in upside down,

So instead of coming it went!

SHOW NEWS:

After thirty years, the Lakeland Rose Show has folded up its tents and quietly faded away into nothingness - a great pity, as it was one of the delights of the Northern Show scene.



But it takes more than that to daunt a Cumbrian! Because of this show's demise, Kendal Wine Circle is founding a new show, entitled the 'LAKELAND WINE SHOW'. With their section of last year's Rose Show attracting nearly six hundred bottles, they thought it a shame to let the show die completely, and the new Show is being held at Kendal R U F C's ground, Shap Rd. Kendal, on Saturday 11th July 1992. And to make it a family occasion, they are also having a Car Boot Sale, Craft Fair, Homemade Cake Stall, Tombola, Morning Coffee, Afternoon Tea, and NORWEB's Bouncy Castle. Caravan pitches can be booked on site, if you want to stay overnight, for Friday and/or Saturday nights, should you wish to make a Lakeland weekend of it. And there will be a dance on Saturday night, making it a really full weekend.

We wish Kendal every success with this new venture, and hope that wine and beer makers from far and wide will support them. Contact Mrs Barbara Mason, Rocklands, Greenside, Hincaster, Milnthorpe, Cumbria LA7 7NA for further details, or telephone her on 05395 62223. See you at the Show!

ALLIVER'S GARDENER'S GUIDE NO. 2

A winemaker who lived at Dounreay
 In a lecture was once heard to say
 "If you're troubled with aphids,
 Then certain and safe is
 To 'nuke' 'em and blast 'em away!"

GENERAL NOTES: Federations - please keep sending in those Newsletters; I'll forward them when our new Editor is appointed. I'm sorry that there has been little use made of them this issue, though I must congratulate Scraftoft on the 1940's Dance they organised to raise funds for Charities, with the ticket in the form of a huge tie-on label, and printed on the back as an identification of the 'Evacuee' wearing it.

If you are going to the Channel Isles for a holiday visit, be sure to contact Tom Roussel, Chairman of Guernsey Wine Circle, of Rocher, Rocher Lane, Vale, Guernsey, tel 0481 57620; the Circle would love to have visitors from the mainland at its meetings.

BOOK REVIEW : OLD BRITISH BEERS AND HOW TO MAKE THEM

This is a revised version of the original Durden Park Beer Club booklet of old beers. The booklet has been completely revised, with a far greater explanation of how and why the recipes were formulated and tested.

The first part of the booklet deals with historical notes as to how the hops, malt, water and yeasts of yesteryear compare with today's, and how today's ingredients were used to imitate their past equivalents.

The second part of the book is full of recipes, which are divided into three parts: Medieval, Pale and Amber, and Brown and Dark. Having made two or three of the Pale beers, and tasted some of the Medieval and Dark beers made from these recipes, I can only say that they are all excellent but do need treating with respect.

An excellent little reference book for the serious BEERMAKERS who want to know more about the history of beermaking.

Dave Pulley, NGWBJ

(47 fascinating pages! £3.34 inc P&P from Dr. J Harrison, 5 Dorney Reach Rd. Maidenhead, Berks. SL6 ODX