

# ◆ News & Views ◆

November 1999



Try the puzzle on page 12. It is guaranteed to keep the thinking over the Holiday



See the High alcohol wine recipe on p. 6 and food recipes on page 7.

The 2000 National Schedule is now out. Reserve the dates 14th -16th April

Seasons Greetings from all the Committee

Dear All,

I hope all your Demijohns and fermenters are full and fermenting. Here in the Garden of England we have had a strange season. A very late frost killed off a lot of my soft fruit. Both Redcurrants and Blackcurrants suffered badly so I was unable to pick any this year. Some gooseberry survived and I managed to make 5 gallons. Stoned fruit on the farms round our way have had a magnificent crop and I have made many gallons of both red and white. While we were having an evening with my son's new father in law he said I've got this funny tree out in the back garden and it's loaded with small black plums. I never refuse anything free so we went out side to see these small black plums. My freezer is now full of lovely ripe damsons. When I have a free container they will be fermenting.

Several years ago at the English Wine Festival, our wine club found a supplier of Apple Juice who was prepared to sell in bulk provided we supplied the containers. I will soon be on my way down to see him again this year with 10, 5 gallon containers for our club. 50 gallons is about 5 hundredweight so I drive home very carefully.

With this News and Views you should receive the Schedule for Weston. Please try to enter as many bottles as you can.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Dave Pulley - President.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Time really does seem to fly these days, well it does for me. It doesn't seem that long ago that we were getting ready for the Scarborough show, and now it's Weston on the horizon. It doesn't seem that long ago that we were getting all those messages that, "*we only have 4-5 years to ensure the World is not disabled by unprepared computer systems*", and now it's only weeks away (the new millennium not the catastrophe). I hope we're Y2K compliant.

Now the Millennium will be celebrated by us all to a lesser or greater extent, and we make no apologies for headlining the Weston Show as a "Millennium Show", after all, it should be an all year round celebration not just one day. So why don't you all make that special effort to make this one of your Millennium celebrations and join many of your friends for our special show.

I'm sure we all want to carry N.A.W.B. into the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a vibrant organisation providing a better service to its members, and to the hobby. One way we can help this is to support the show.

But ... the committee also want to improve N.A.W.B., in areas other than the Annual Show, and to that extent, will be seeking to get as much constructive feedback as possible

from you, the members. The insurance initiative seems to be very successful to date, and we hope will get used more widely, but are there other things that you want your committee to do that will enhance our association?

We want to halt the decline in our hobby if possible and would like your input on what we should be doing in the new millennium. The committee will obviously try and consider all suggestions, so don't feel inhibited, air your views either through the pages of News & Views, write or phone a committee member, or see us at Weston.

But enough of the "business talk".

I can't forget that we have Christmas approaching (the shops wont let me). So whilst I have mentioned the Millennium a lot, and will no doubt do so in later issues, I hope you are all prepared for the Christmas festivities.

We will be celebrating Christmas and the New Year (or the start of the Millennium) with some family and friends, and particularly with the Grand children.

I hope you have very happy and memorable Christmas and New Year celebrations, and that your wine and beer making increases, improves and brings pleasure throughout next year.

Alan Eldret - Chairman

**EDITORS COMMENT**

Hello everyone, I hope you are all keeping well. Another issue of your newsletter brim full of articles. I would like to thank all those who sent in articles. I would also like to thank the Federations that send copies of their newsletters and allow me to "lift" articles or cartoons. I normally acknowledge them individually, but in case I've missed out, thanks. Are there any other member Federation that might have articles in their newsletter that they could send me? Your committee have been very busy in preparation for Weston, as well as running all the other aspects of your association. It is not an easy task, it is voluntary, and the majority of the committee still have to fit in the work with holding down a job. As I mentioned in the last issue, there is a lot of new blood on the committee and therefore we are reluctant to be too radical in what is a year when a number of officers are "learning" their roles. But, there are more good ideas in this issue and I can report that the committee does try to review all points you raise.

There is a lot in this issue about changes to the schedule and about the National weekend itself. In the next issue I will update you on our preparation, and I hope by then we will have received a bumper number of entries. Jo as Entries Secretary is spending a lot of time learning the computer system, more about that next time.

Thank you Phoenix Club, who kindly donated the handmade wooden box containing wine and glasses to the raffle at Scarborough. Sorry we missed this acknowledgement in the last issue.

You may have noticed that I have not included the Diary on the back page. Unfortunately, I had very few details of shows or significant events, so it didn't make it a practical proposition. Please send me, or call me, with all your major dates for next year. We really want to publicise your events. I would like the next issue to include a few wine and beer recipes to make in the New year. They could be special Millennium recipes, or just your favourite, but please send some in for me to give National coverage to.

Finally, there are one or two articles in this issue that refer to the decline in our hobby. We all have to do something about this, we can't leave it to "them". At the time of going to press, I have heard that publication of "Home Wine & Beer Maker" has been suspended through lack of support. I don't have verification of this, but if so, it will not help our cause. On that note I will leave you all to ponder on what New Year resolution you are going to make to enhance our cause, and wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy new year.

All the best, Alan - Editor

**YOUR COMMITTEE**

No changes to report, we didn't want the following guy part-time

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**Thanks for your support.**

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**2000 NATIONAL/SCHEDULE**

You will have received your schedule with this newsletter, or, possibly delivered personally to save postage.

This year, the schedule has been produced by Steve Bamber and although we have followed the old schedule in format, there are some changes that we have brought about either in response to your points at the AGM or in correspondence. We are also making some changes to the events of the National weekend and I have tried below to give reasons for some of the changes.

**Accommodation** – always a problem, so we have this year tried to coordinate any campers, and have got some contact for other accommodation. You can see details of both in the schedule, and we hope that in the February edition of N & V we may get some hotels listed for those last minute bookings. Keith Roberts is working on a list, but we suggest you don't wait till then for your booking, it's just a fall-back situation if you really are struggling to find somewhere.

**Conference booking** – The discount we started last year for members of at least two consecutive years, did not seem to encourage any extra attendance or continuous membership, and we therefore probably lost a little income. However, we thought we would try for one more year to give a small incentive to you loyal members albeit with a slightly smaller reduction. Please all of you make it worthwhile this year by having a bumper attendance at the National and keeping up your membership even if you really can't attend.

**Liqueurs** – An unusual class this year, White fruit. I have put a small article elsewhere on the class.

**National Evening Socials** – We have had some good correspondence and ideas, and have had a lot of discussion time on this subject at committee meetings. On committee we always have difficulty in balancing the differing views of members and will never get it completely correct. This year there is the added complication that we have new committee members in many positions so there is quite a learning curve to go through. However, on the **Friday night** we have decided to retain the free tasting, but will have less variety and

better quality. We will also lay it out in the hall slightly differently to make the evening a little more structured. We have also booked a different entertainer called "Just Haze" who is highly recommended and we will try to make it an improvement on last year.

**Saturday** is the evening when no member has an excuse for not attending and enjoying the evening social. There will be no long journey to recover from, and you can either celebrate or drown your sorrows from the morning competition, and the afternoon tasting I'm sure will have lifted you. We have taken on board comments about the style of music from one of our correspondence and we can assure you the committee are all young at heart (if not in the rest of their body). We have booked a group called "The Cliff Brown Quartet" who come recommended from the South West Show, where they apparently had the floor crowded for the whole evening with a variety of music. We hope this works as at least we are moving away from the "Council recommended" list. Also on the Saturday night, we are going to try and get all committee members out to your tables at some time in the evening to meet you all and get your feedback. Please remember two things about these visits. Firstly, we are your committee of amateurs doing our best, so please be constructive and kind. Secondly, we would quite like to try your best wines and beers.

**Class changes** – You will see in the schedule that we have modified some of the open classes, and taken the least popular ones out. We have also converted two of these to Open Novice classes. Now we know that this will cause concern in some quarters, but we have done this in an attempt to attract new members to exhibit, who might otherwise feel overwhelmed by the thought of the "National". It is quite clearly a National Novice class and not an attempt to undermine the principle that we want competition between the best. Hopefully it will encourage more members, and for them to take on the best in all the other classes if this works. We will monitor this "experiment" to see its results. We have also made a slight change to

the two Aperitif classes to make them Medium to Sweet, this being a well reasoned suggestion by a member.

**New Trophy** – We have had a new trophy presented by Anne and Jim Par-rack. It will be awarded to the competitor with the most award cards for the closed wine classes, excluding the Master winemakers. It is the same in its intention as the Brian Keer Trophy for beer makers, which is to have a special trophy which could be won by a competitor who makes lots of good entries but may not actually get a trophy for any one award. So let's see all those entries. Thanks Anne and Jim from the committee and all members.

Alan Eldret

**LIQUEUR – WHITE FRUIT**

In Next years National, the Liqueur class is White Fruit. There have been one or two comments about this selection, questioning whether it is too restrictive, but we have discussed this in committee and will continue with it as we did publish this in the 1999 schedule and believe it provides both a challenge and a change.

We quickly thought of a few Fruits that could be used for this Class, and I have listed them below. There are probably a lot we haven't thought of, including some of the more exotic imported fruits, so let's all get started on a liqueur and make this a real special class.

Fruits we thought of :

Peach, Banana, Orange, Apricot, Lemon, Pineapple, White Currant, Bul-lace, Greengage, Grape, White Elder-ber-ry, Golden Plum, Apple, Pear, Gooseberry, and there are probably lots more. **From the Committee.**

**STOP PRESS**

A wrong computer system parameter has unfortunately meant that the Schedule has a slight error on page 7. It "appeared" after first draft reading. The class numbering should read from class 72 at the top down to 88 at the bottom. I have caught most of the copies and hand corrected them so it should not inconvenience you, but please check your copy just in case. Many apologies. **STEVE**

### IN HEAVEN AT LAST A WINE TASTING HOLIDAY

**Sat 29th May** Having at last persuaded my friend Liz to set foot on a ferry, on Peter and I joined her and Andy at Portsmouth Ferry Port where we met up with the rest of the gang in Judith Irwin's excursion to the Loire. There were 30 of us which, explained Judith, left plenty of room in the coach and luggage compartments. That was extremely fortunate, in view of the vast quantity of the European Wine Lake purchased and stashed by the party as the holiday progressed. It was a great mistake not to have booked a cabin. I "slept" on the floor as reclining seats were not designed for comfort. Nevertheless, we were all chirpy and excited as we sped southwards the next morning. We had been told to include a tasting glass in our hand luggage and before the sun was over the yardarm Judith was providing us with delicious wines to get us into training, so to speak. We experienced a Crémant de Saumur, a 1985 Vouvray Demi Sec and an Anjou Rouge. What an introduction!

**Sun 30th May** was market day in Le Mans, where we made a 2 hour stop and saw the French bearing armfuls of blooms and flowering plants away from the market. We discovered that it was the "Fête des Mamans" - Mothers' Day. We were very lucky to find the impressive cathedral open during the normal French two-hour lunch closure as there was a christening in progress. It was very warm and we sat outside a café soaking up the atmosphere and glasses of cold beer. Ken, our driver, drove a gently snoring group to the Hostellerie Du Maine at Le Lude, where we arrived in the late afternoon to enjoy drinks in the garden whilst our luggage was taken to our rooms by Judith's grandson, Christopher. After freshening up, Peter and I explored the village and saw the Chateau Le Lude (closed) and the river. It's a good job we did - for this most definitely was not a sightseeing trip, apart from the wonderful daily views from the coach. That evening we enjoyed a traditional French dinner at the hotel and nobody needed much persuasion to have an early night. We had to learn to cope with the heat and the incredibly noisy French night-time traffic and were a bit bleary eyed the next morning.

**Mon 31st May** dawned hot and sunny. After a traditional French breakfast we were soon on our way to Angers to visit the firm of Cointreau. On the way Liz and I picked out a few mini chateaux and country houses where we could do a nice line in B&B. We thought we'd call ourselves "The Two Ladies With Fat Ankles" as the sitting and the heat had affected our feet a bit.

A very efficient young lady guided us around the Cointreau Museum giving us a potted history of the firm en route. The wealth of ephemera in the museum shows either foresight or massive good luck that had provided the firm with so many labels, bottles posters and advertising artefacts from the past. We saw the bottling plant from a lengthy gallery that was part of the museum. Peter and I were both prevented from taking photos - fear of industrial espionage, I suppose. In the tasting room we were given generous glasses of a cocktail called Moorea, made from Cointreau (of course), Passoa, which is a passion fruit drink, grapefruit

juice and a dash of lemon juice. One seemed to drink one's way through the various flavours with the Cointreau last. We did get some hints about the fiercely secret recipe. The alcohol is made from sugar beet. The flavour comes from imported bitter and sweet dried orange skins, mint, angelica and eucalyptus. Last of all in our visit came the shop. Liz, who was already in heaven, bought a 1.5 litre bottle of Cointreau.

On the way to Domaine Saupin to taste Muscadets, Judith gave us some relevant information. I remarked, "Oh dear, I feel some wine buying coming on", and was offered an aspirin. It wouldn't have helped..... We saw Serge Saupin's huge grape vine nursery. He said that he had about 3,000,000 vine plants of many varieties and that he sells them to France, Spain and Italy. We saw the grafting onto American stock and the wax coating of the graft and then we went into the unbearably hot (35°C) and humid propagation chamber. Phew! After that we were given a tasting of M. Saupin's excellent wines. Peter and I were very taken with the 1997 Muscadet sur Lie and bought 12 bottles at about £3.00 each. Ken stowed all the purchases in the nether regions of the coach and we proceeded to Angers for dinner. Some of us discovered the Restaurant La Ferme in Place Freppel where we enjoyed a delicious 3 course meal for about £9.00. For dessert we chose Tarte Tatin, a caramelised apple flan cooked up-side-down. It was dark when we got back to Le Lude and we were ready for bed! Ken the driver was pleased that Keith alone had the stamina to stay up to have a drink with him.

**Tues 1st June** dawned hot and sunny again. We were soon on our way to Vouvray. We saw many houses cut into the living tuffeau rock of the cliffs along the River Loire. Even regular houses were cut back into the rock and had outbuildings and garden sheds in the cliffs. A cave dweller is called a troglodyte. Tuffeau is a chalky limestone sedimentary rock and was much used for cathedrals, churches, chateaux and civic buildings, hence the massive cool caves now available to the wine producers. We arrived at the Cave Des Producteurs Des Grands Vins De Vouvray and put our jumpers on to pass from the outside heat into the chilly, steady 55° F of the caves. The walls were covered with the black fungus that lives on alcohol fumes and the roofs dripped onto us. The guide spoke very good English and gave us a fascinating description of the tortuous production of sparkling wines. The remueur can twist 7,000 bottles of wine by a few degrees an hour. This is done daily to work the yeast of the second fermentation into the neck of the up-turned bottles. She said that the caves could also be used for mushroom growing, and indeed, the Saumur area is renowned for its mushrooms. The caves that we were in had 2km of tunnels and covered 5 acres in area. There are millions of bottles of wine in "tranquil repose in the galleries for many years". We began to appreciate the endless permutations and possibilities of the chameleon-like Chenin Blanc grape. Next came the tasting. I was taken with the 1985 Vouvray Demi Sec and purchased 6 bottles at 35F each - about £3.50. What a bargain! Peter found the

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younger wines a little taxing. The Loire seems to wash its banks with a charge of tartaric acid.

Ken stashed the purchases and away we went to La Grande Vignolle at Saumur Champigny for lunch and a tasting of Domaine Filliatreau wines with it. Champigny is the red wine capital of Anjou/Saumur. Domaine Filliatreau produces mainly red wines of the Loire from the Cabernet Franc grape. We saw the attractive restored pigeon house and the view of the valley floor where the vines are planted in the French National Monuments' design of a labyrinth. We had a tour of the former troglodyte house inhabited until the 1960's before we were led into the cave restaurant. All paper and fabric was damp and we thought that they must have had huge fires all the time to make the rooms habitable. We began with small spicy bread cakes, topped with a walnut and filled with rillettes (shredded meat pâté), accompanied by a sparkling Vouvray. The next three delicious courses were accompanied by suitable red and white wines. We felt that their 1992 red let them down badly. We took the decision not to purchase wines, but some did. On we went to Saumur where we just missed Le Petit Train tour and quaffed a consolation beer. We purchased a picnic supper to eat later and sat by the Loire where it was pleasantly cool. Madame de Bakker did not mind in the least our picnicking in the Hotel garden and we sat out until the insects began their supper forcing us to adjourn to the bar. Liz and Andy were thrown out at 12.15a.m. as Madame needed her sleep!

**Wed 2nd June** By now I was getting used to the traffic and slept well. It was cooler and after breakfast we set off for the Chateau De Plaisance at Rochefort sur Loire. We were now in the Coteaux du Layon, an area which produces sumptuously sweet wines. The viticulteur, Guy Rochais, showed us his best vineyard. He was experimenting with insecticide capsules hung on the vines rather than sprays. It is a very expensive method, but was successful last year. The soil was very stony and the pebbles were multi-coloured metamorphic and igneous fragments. The views from the vineyard were stunning with great sweeps of vines over gently rolling hills. They were even better from the raised tasting room which has huge picture windows overlooking the terrain. The buffet prepared by Madame Rochais was amazing and dramatic in its presentation. Our apéritif was a chilled and luscious Coteaux du Layon Chaume 1998, with which we ate morsels of cooked pork presented in a massive hollowed-out cylindrical loaf. The belly pork had been cooked in its own juices with thyme, bay and seasoning in a closed casserole for 5 hours. It was very rich and some of us overdid it a bit. The next wine was a Coteaux du Layon Chaume 1996, one step up in sweetness. When we were poured a honeyed sumptuous, Quarts de Chaume 1997 (£11.00 a bottle) we were in heaven. Keith will never forget being told that one vine makes one glass of wine so that we had already each drunk 1.5 vines' annual production, and that the party had drunk the product of 45 vines in 30 minutes! One could sense M. Rochais' great pride in these, his best wines. His massive

Newfoundland retriever with webbed feet sat obediently in the doorway, his eyes pleading for gourmet food - not allowed as he was on a diet. He had become too fat, had fallen and broken a leg!

We were then served slices of two fish pâtés to clear our palates, before going on to the 1998 dry white Savannières which accompanied it. Then came cold roast beef and charcuterie from an amazing oval display platter almost 3' by 2'. With this we tasted an Anjou Rouge and an Anjou Villages 1996 which had won a Bronze Medal in Paris this year. A huge platter of cheeses then materialised and we forced ourselves to eat. Peter asked M. Rochais if he could taste his 1997 Cabernet d'Anjou (Rosé demi sec), a wine with firm fragrance, and immediately ordered 6 bottles! We also couldn't help purchasing some of the unforgettable sweet wines.

That was a tasting to remember. We repaired to the nearby village of Denée to a café owned by yet another of Judith's friends to drink tea, coffee or beer to brace ourselves for the next experience. Off we went, a little jaded, to Domaine Richou at nearby Mozé/Louet owned by Didier Richou and his brother. He had a different approach to winemaking, being a geologist. We had the importance of terroir explained to us with examples of rock and geological maps. Peter and I thought that the wines had a uniqueness that we hadn't encountered before and their excellence soon perked us up. This is a translation of the description of our first wine:

**AOC Anjou Blanc Sec "Les Rogeries" 1997 44.00F**

Wine issuing from the Chenin variety gathered in 3 pickings on slopes of rhyolites (microgranites). Wine with a strong personality given by its volcanic ground. Powerful and fine at the same time, it possesses a nose of cooked apple and a mineral character (steely and flinty) in the mouth. Wine to keep, at 14.2% alcohol. **Accompaniment:** fish in sauce, white meats, cheeses.

All of M. Richou's descriptions give importance to the character of the ground where the grapes are grown. He told us that the 3 pickings for this wine, which is from 8 year - old vines, were fermented separately and then blended together. Only the finest juice from gentle pressing is used. We really enjoyed his Coteaux de l'Aubance 1997 "Les 3 Demoiselles", a luscious sweet wine, so named because 3 girls had been born into the Richou family the year it was made. Coteaux d'Aubance is a very small appellation. We couldn't help buying some of his Anjou Blanc and red Anjou Villages "Viellies Vignes" 1996 from 47 year-old vines. Didier Richou is experimenting with less spraying of his vines and his 1998 Cabernet d'Anjou has not been sulphited, just filtered. "So far, so good," he said with his fingers crossed. We had tasted 13 wines during the course of the day..... Snores were heard throughout the coach as Ken drove us back to le Lude where Madame was preparing the dinner. Even the ubiquitous Trimphone was silent. (private joke) Christopher invited us to partake of a glass of sparkling pink Saumur (I think) with him before dinner. You either adore Fruits de Mer or can't bear to look at it. The enthusiasts,

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(including myself) picked their way through their seafood whilst the wary had safer starters. The winkles and shrimps were far too small to have been sacrificed, but the mussels, prawns and huge langoustines made up for it. The rest of the meal was excellent and we could hardly stagger to the bar. During the meal, Barbara and Ray had treated us all to a class of unique red sparkling wine in celebration of their wedding anniversary.

Thurs 3rd June began with an early morning saunter around Le Lude market where the stalls did a nice little line in 1960's crimplene dresses and wrap-around pinafores, and the fruit and veg and cheese stalls were out of this world. We waved farewell to Madame and the Hotel du Maine and travelled southwards to the co-operative Les Caves De La Loire at Brissac. This was a newly-built, efficient and computerised set-up. It was a wine box and trolley job! You could buy bottles of their excellent wines as well, but Peter and I immediately saw the wines for our July barbecue and ended up buying four 5-litre wine boxes - Anjou Blanc AC, Anjou Rouge AC, Cabernet d'Anjou AC and Chardonnay Vin de Pays Jardin de France - for about £31.00. That's around 28 bottles. Back over the Loire for the last time and onto the motorway. We stopped at a hypermarket for lunch, cheeses and other last minute purchases. Roy bought some more wine! When we descended on a small café late in the afternoon, the proprietor thought Christmas had arrived. We were presented with cards and mini gifts and invited to view his premises. At Le Havre, a group of us had a splendid and reasonable rushed meal in a pizzeria. The waiter and the rest of the clientele seemed to be nice boys! Then it was onto the ferry and another night on the floor for me. I'll never forget the look on the taxi drivers' faces when they saw our piles of loot on the wet footpath of Havant Bus Station in the grey early morning light!

Thanks are due to Judith for arranging so many stunning tastings and to Ken for driving us safely for hundreds of miles, despite French tractors and escaped horses.

#### JAN MITCHELL

*Thanks a lot Jan, it sounded great. How could you remember such a detailed diary of events? Thanks for the invite to edit it, but I reckon the full diary is good, and might tempt others to try. Editor..*

#### A LETTER

We received a nice letter from Marion Morgan recently. She was unable to attend the last National due to broken leg. However, she also took the opportunity to send these kind words:

"May I take this opportunity to thank you and all the committee for all the work entailed in running "The Club", and to wish you all another year of Good Wine making and Friendship.

A little early, but A Happy Christmas and New Year"

Thanks a lot Marion, from all the Committee, it's nice to be appreciated. We hope your health is now better and that we'll see you at Weston.

#### MILLENNIUM WINE

*(Editor note: Please remember when reading this that it was originally written in Nov. 1997 and updated in Jan. 1998 so whilst some comments on timing may be dated, the article is nevertheless a good one for the Millennium.)*

This is less a recipe than a guidance as to how to achieve something.

Basically, the idea is to produce a high alcohol wine, 20% if possible, with a good sugar content, and a full flavour. If it is made now (or thereabouts) then it needs to have a good tannin and acid level, together with the alcohol and flavour so that it matures properly, to give a Port type wine to celebrate the Millennium.

The recipe for the wine shown here was made in January 1997. When tasted in January 1998, it had lost some of its full red colour to give way to a more mature colour of tawny. The wine tasted very good, but could have been a bit sweeter, but there's nothing to stop sugar being added even now. (As an inverted sugar syrup maybe, but inversion will take place anyway, albeit slower, because of the acid content.) It needs to be kept an eye on, and tasting in the middle of the year still leaves enough time to make another batch if it is felt that this one is maturing too fast and won't last another 18 months. It is an excellent wine even now though.

#### Ingredients

1 can (1 litre) Boots red grape concentrate.

3 x 1 litre Red Grape juice.

4 oz frozen elderberries.

1 jar Bilberries (540 grams gross weight, 220 grams net )

Gervin pectic enzyme, ½ tablet.

Gervin Minavit nutrient, 1 gram.

Sugar total 12 oz, added as 4 oz, then a further 8 oz, as fermentation progresses.

Gervin Gold Label Yeast EC1118

(one of the new high alcohol yeasts may be even better)

#### Method

Ferment the elderberries and bilberries in one litre of red grape juice, with an active starter from the yeast. Fermented 4 days on the berries, temperature about 70°F, then strain off the juice from the berries and put into a demijohn. Add the can of grape concentrate and the outstanding two litres of red grape juice. This is probably best done in a large container before pouring into the demijohn.

The demijohn should be full or near enough. Take a hydrometer reading, which should be about 1086. As the fermentation progresses, take further hydrometer readings, using up the 12 oz of sugar. The aim is to have the wine finishing at about 1035-1040, and the alcohol content of around 20%. Just keep adding more sugar whilst the ferment keeps going, allowing it to drop down to say 1020, then building it up again to 1040 and so on.

Try to keep the jar full after the first active ferment, and top up with grape juice when racking off etc. (which adds a little sweetness of course)

The choice of elderberries and bilberries was completely arbitrary. It is up to the wine maker to decide if an improvement can be made, and substitute appropriately.

**Bernard Lamb**

**FOOD RECIPE PAGE**

The following recipes that have been sent in should give some interesting ideas for the coming holiday season. Let me know how you fare with them. Also, why not try the recipes on the back of the Millennium Schedule. Also, let me know if you want regular food recipes, and if so, send some in.

**SOME PRIZEWINNING RECIPES FROM CCAWF SHOW**

The following recipes are from **Pat Lord** of Peterborough Wine and Beer Circle. The first two have won first prizes and the third recipe got a second.

**SUMMER PASSION (BAVAROIS)****Ingredients:**

450g Red Summer Fruits  
8 Passion Fruit  
2 Tablespoons Blackcurrant Wine  
115g Caster Sugar  
200ml Creme Fraiche

**Method:**

Scrape the flesh from the passion fruit into a pan, add half the sugar and heat until the juice runs. Sieve and cool. Puree the summer fruits and sieve; add the wine and remaining sugar to them. Set aside. Take 2 small bowls and place half the gelatine in each. Soak with a little hot water then dissolve over simmering water. Mix 1 bowl of gelatine with the passion fruit and chill. Mix the other with the red fruit and chill. Whip the cream to soft peaks and as soon as the passion fruit thickens whisk it into the creme fraiche. As soon as both mixes begin to set fold half of the whipping cream into each. Layer the mixtures into individual glass dishes and chill before serving. Top decorate if wished with mint leaf or perhaps a chocolate one.

**HAM AND PARSLEY MOULD**

**Ingredients:** (quantities will depend upon size of mould used)

Parsley  
Tin of cooked ham  
Dry white wine  
Aspic powder  
Garnishes of your choice

**Method:**

Remove any jelly from the ham then cut into small neat cubes. Make up as-

pic according to the packet but use a wine/water mixture instead of just water. Chop parsley. When aspic has almost set line the dish with your chosen garnish. Allow these to set then layer ham and parsley with remaining aspic to fill the mould. Chill until set then turn out and serve with salad or boiled potatoes. Nice for that special occasion

**PORK AND LIVER TERRINE WITH HAZEL NUTS****Ingredients:**

6 ozs Pigs liver  
4 tablespoons strong apple wine  
(or Cider)

8 ozs Belly Pork  
Chopped Hazel nuts  
2 oz lard  
Salt and Black pepper to taste  
1 med. sized onion finely chopped  
Aspic and herbs to decorate (Optional)

**Method:**

Mince the meats and mix with the onion, salt, pepper, nuts, lard and wine. Allow to stand for 1 hour covered before placing into suitable oven-proof dishes. Cover with foil and bake in a medium hot oven (300 for gas mark 2) for about 1.5 hours or until cooked. Allow to go cold then decorate with aspic and herbs if liked. Refrigerate for 2 days before eating to achieve full flavour. Will freeze (undecorated) for up to one month. This terrine has a medium texture and is lovely served with crisp toast.

Cost less than £4.00

*Editor: Thanks a lot Pat, and well done in the competitions.*

**A LOVELY PUDDING**

The following recipe from **Audrey Atwell** of Telford Wine Circle, gave her a 1<sup>st</sup> prize at the recent South West Counties Federation Show at Twitchen Park, North Devon. Do give it a try. (It is a lovely alternative to Christmas Pudding).

**DRUNKEN SPONGE (Serves 6)****Sponge ingredient:**

4 ozs butter  
4 ozs caster sugar  
2 size 2 eggs, beaten  
4 ozs self raising flour, sieved  
2 fluid ozs sweet wine

**Topping ingredient:**

4-tblsp caster sugar  
4 tblsp water  
¼ pint sweet wine  
6 ozs icing sugar, sieved  
½ pint double cream, whipped  
Fresh fruit

**Method:**

Cream butter and sugar. Gradually add beaten eggs and wine and fold in sieved flour. Spoon into greased, floured ring tin and bake 20/25 mins at 180 C. Turn out onto wire rack and place plate underneath. Dissolve the four-tblsp sugar in water and boil for 5 mins. Prick sponge all over and pour over the hot syrup followed by the sweet wine. Mix icing sugar with a little wine and drizzle over the sponge. Pile whipped cream and fresh fruit in the centre.

*Editor: Thanks a lot Audrey, and well done in the competition.*

**SOME EVENTS YOU MAY BE INTERESTED IN.****"Little Red Riding Hood" Pantomime 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Feb 2000.**

Grove Hill Wine & Beer Making Club are putting on this pantomime for two nights at the Leverstock Green Village Hall, Hemel Hempstead, for the exorbitant cost of £3 a ticket. If you would like to be in the audience and be amazed by the talent then write to me, address below, enclosing a cheque made out to "GHW&BMC" and a stamped addressed envelope.

*Ed: Sounds fun, do I get a "Press ticket" to watch Mike "Slapping his thighs".*

**Wine and Camping Weekend 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> May 2000.**

As it states, this weekend sees us camping in Epping Forest and, together with tasting wines put on by Cathedral Wines and Judith Irwin of course, makes for an interesting time with no worries about drink and drive. This year was a success and we are hoping that it will be again next. The cost is about £15 per person for the tastings (from Friday evening to Sunday morning) plus the camping fee and electric used. Contact me, address below. Numbers are limited.

Chris Randall.

123 Primrose Hill, Kings Langley, Herts, WD4 8HX. (01923 263956)

In the last issue of News & Views, we paid tribute to two Past Presidents, Peter Awbery and Roy Butcher, who had both died earlier this year. They had also both been Chairmen as well as holding other key positions on your committee. This issue we print opposite a lovely memory of Peter and of the effort he put in to winemaking locally.

Also, I am saddened to report that Stan Baker died recently. Well known and liked by many members, and always happy to encourage our newsletter with regular, informative articles. He will be missed. Alan Eldret - Chairman

#### STAN BAKER

Stan died on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1999. He was 79 years old. Stan's early life involved service in the Army in 1939 and lasted right through World War II. He saw service in the North African and Italian campaigns and from D-Day plus 6 across Europe to Berlin. He married Peggy in 1959. Together they shared a passion for wine and both helped start many wine clubs and societies.

Most of his working life, Stan created art work for advertising purposes and then latterly was employed in the Civil Service. Stan was a total extrovert with a strong personality. He belonged to and organised many groups that included Table Tennis, Photography, Dancing, the Morris Minor Society and of course the world of wine.

He sought no sympathy regarding his unfortunate condition during the last few months and would conclude any brief discussion on his health by a robust swear word and then quickly change the subject. His one regular complaint during his time in hospital was that he had no one in all the other beds with whom he could hold a decent conversation. There will be many like me, who will miss his regular posting of a few notes plus a mass of cuttings all placed in a large recycled envelope. His output of the written word in which he expounded an opinion in a lucid and informative manner on so many subjects, was simply enormous. It will be missed by the Editor of a variety of newspapers, magazines and club newsletters including our own "News & Views". Surely, however, the Editor of the "Heavenly News" has received by now Stan's first detailed epistle, perhaps entitled "the Advantages and Disadvantages of Cloud Formations".

Cheers Stan!

Neil South - Member of N.A.W.B. and N.G.W.B.J.

#### FOND MEMORIES OF PETER AWBERY

We all know and remember the important part that Peter played in the N.A.W.B. organisation for many years, We have other memories closer to home that we should like to share with you.

We started making wine in 1968. Peter always seemed to be where the winemakers were, helping and encouraging them. We always looked forward to his happy visits to our club, the Sheppey Wine Circle. (Sheppey is a small island not far from Faversham where Peter lived and about fifteen miles away). Peter and June would visit our club many times each year. One of my favourite recollections is of our annual "Wine and Home Made Bread" evening. Peter would begin the evening with a quiz or talk which was always amusing and interesting; later in the evening June would judge the home-made bread - all shapes and sizes, while Peter selected the best wines. Everybody then shared and enjoyed the results of their labours - a thoroughly enjoyable evening!

Another happy memory is our visit to the home of June and Peter when they lived on the edge of the forest at Challock, our first visit was in 1975. Peter did the "guided tour of his forest", and we remember his vast knowledge of plants and the insect world. He was so keen and interesting answering our many questions and telling us about life in the forest. After the walk we returned to their home for a picnic in the garden.

While on the subject of trees, another memory that we share with Peter is that of a Spruce tree which he brought along to the S.W.C. Annual Garden Party for a raffle prize. When I won this little tree it was about nine inches in height; the tree is now twelve years old and is much bigger. Each year we bring the tree indoors and decorate it for Christmas and remember Peter and his little Spruce tree. This year as we bring the tree indoors, we shall think of Peter and all that he has done and be glad of our happy time together.

These are just a few of my local memories, but we National Members who have shared our great weekends together will always remember Peter's warmth as he greeted and cared for everybody throughout the weekend and how hard he worked for the N.A.W.B. and all winemakers.

Many thanks Peter. God Bless you.

Josie Bourne and family

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**MORE REPORTS FROM YOUR COMMITTEE AND MORE THOUGHTS ABOUT THE NATIONAL SHOW.****MEMBERSHIP 1999 UPDATE**

Our membership at 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct 1999 is 283 – far short of what it should be by this time of the year. If you know of any 1999 members who have not yet renewed PLEASE remind them that membership is actually due on 1<sup>st</sup> July. Is your Circle/Federation a member? Do you know of any other Circles in the area that might be persuaded to join? Are there any more of your own Circle members who could swell our numbers and keep NAWB alive?

As stated in the last News & Views, the 'recruiting campaign' was very successful last year and is being repeated for the year 2000. If you are able to recruit your circle or some circle members we will be very pleased to hear from you. We are again offering a prize of £25 for the 'lucky winner' whose name will be drawn 'out of the hat' at the AGM in April next year.

Please consider setting up a Direct Debit. This saves the problem we all have nowadays of remembering when membership is due. Direct Debits will be acknowledged on your bank statement, and of course no change will be made to the instruction without your authority. You will find a Direct Debit form on the inside back page of this issue. Please complete it today and take or send it to your bank.

Finally, can I remind members paying by post to include a STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE? Already this year (since 1<sup>st</sup> July) NAWB has spent over £7 (37 2<sup>nd</sup> class stamps) sending receipts to those who have forgotten to send an SAE. (See "Are receipts necessary?" elsewhere in this issue).

**Audrey - Membership Secretary.**

**ARE RECEIPTS NECESSARY?**

As mentioned in the Membership 1999 Update, NAWB has already spent over £7 in postage simply sending receipts to members who forget to include an SAE.

What are members' feelings about this unnecessary expense? Do we need to post out these receipts? I am aware that the receipt is proof of payment for each particular year, and this proof may be needed on attendance at an AGM,

but, if required, these could be issued at Annual Conference.

Payment by Cheque (and Standing Order) is acknowledged on the payee's bank statement and therefore, strictly speaking, does not require a receipt.

How would members feel if we were to issue the receipt ONLY if members enclosed an SAE?

I know we are talking about a relatively small amount, but we are trying to keep expenditure to a minimum and I feel that the postage for receipts is unnecessary. What do you think?

Let us have your views on this please, so that Committee can discuss it.

**Audrey - Membership Secretary**

**RECEIPTS AND NEWS & VIEWS**

I think that this is an appropriate place to put in a note about the newsletter and the labelling of the envelope.

Address labels for the News & Views are printed out from the computer system we operate, and we have started putting membership numbers on the label for information purposes.

Last issue, I felt that a simple indication on the label about whether membership payment is due or not, would save all those pleas we put into the newsletter, and help you to remember.

I believe I have upset a small number of members who did not like this idea, even though I believe it was polite and did not indicate payment was overdue. My apologies to those members who were upset, I will not present labels in that way again.

However, I agree with Audrey's article above that if we can keep down cost, we should. I am therefore proposing that labels in future continue to show membership numbers, and if followed by two xx's, it will be a polite and discreet reminder that current year membership is due. Therefore, if no xx's follow the number, this would indicate to the member that they have paid, and therefore would a receipt be necessary? Of course no xx's would show for say life members.

I have tried it out with this issue, and if you feel we should change it, then please ring me for a brief chat.

**Alan Eldret - Newsletter Editor**

**RE: NATIONAL WEEKEND ANNE HILLS - A RESPONSE**

At last, somebody after my own heart. Well done Anne for putting in writing what I've been only thinking. You are absolutely right in that to encourage new and younger members to our craft, we have to move with the times. Like you we are tired of the "tired bands" whose idea of modern music is old Beatles favourites and the "Birdy Song". The club I belong to only has one dance a year now (unfortunately, as it used to be 3-4) but we have young and old alike, the young being members' own children who are beyond teenage years. We also have a disco who plays everything from waltz to the very modern, and the dance floor is never empty. Wine and Beer, made by club members, is given out on entry so that it can be tasted by those who don't make, just dabble or those who make and want to try another's wine.

We need just one good Saturday evening to bring people back the next year – with friends. Let's get our thinking caps on and try and bring in the people. I am sure the committee is open to suggestions and ideas. I have one or two up my sleeve.

**Chris Randall.**

**CHRIS RANDALL WRITES CAMPING**

Firstly, Mike and I have had a response regarding the camping idea for Weston, albeit small, so we are going to proceed with it. When I was speaking to the avid caravanner on the telephone it came across to me that some people may well go to the National next year because of the camping idea which, as he said, makes the weekend more affordable. Anyway, we'll see. Meanwhile, could you ask Norman Chiverton to put the advertisement in the Judges Newsletter. I'm suggesting this as some Judges may not belong to NAWB and therefore won't know about it. Again, it might get one or two more to attend. Thanks.

*Editor, I've sent Norman a copy, and thanks for co-ordinating this activity. You can find details on another page.*

**CHINNOR WINE CIRCLE**

A committee member had a letter earlier this year from Colin Flack, Programme Sec. of the above circle. They look forward to being at Weston, and took the opportunity to pose a few questions to the committee.

1. Any chance of a National list of speakers, and do we have a list of any Federations with such lists?
2. Could NAWB get special discounts from manufacturers for members?
3. Could NAWB create an Audio/Visual show that could tour around all the wine circles?
4. Could News & Views take advertising to pay for a fuller magazine and maybe even be circulated more widely to the public?
5. Could we develop a Web-site?

All good ideas, and the committee really appreciate such feedback, so I've put some early response to the above ideas, but let me hear from all of you!

1. We are quite happy to maintain a list of speakers, but it will rely on all of you updating that list with your local knowledge. I offer to start such a register and will give a progress report in a later issue. Now, let me hear from you with details!

2. Getting discounts from manufacturers is a problem. I do speak to some of them and I can assure you that they are willing to discuss anything that will advance the mutual interests in our hobby. However, as the hobby has declined, the retailers have also struggled with lower levels of turnover and inevitably higher rents/rates etc. which has reduced their profits. Would any discount system be viable without the retailer? I think that our interests are best served if retailers are able to continue in business and provide some local, impartial knowledge of what's available, and advice. Could I suggest therefore that clubs do develop a good relationship with their retailer and possibly a discount structure could be developed with them. The onus should be on us to USE the local retailer if we want the service, after all, they have to make a living. (I don't have a vested interest) I think NAWB has got to encourage Manufacturers to get even better quality products and find ways of keeping

product cost down. I think the manufacturers have also got to take a lead in promoting our hobby more vigorously on a National basis. This might lead to more competitive prices.

I know this doesn't answer this complex question of yours, but I will make sure it is discussed by our committee, and, I would appreciate any reaction from other members, INCLUDING those manufacturers who are Patrons. 3. I like the idea of an Audio/Visual presentation, but to tour the clubs would probably be too expensive as in the end it is you the members that would have to pay for this. Unless we could get it sponsored. However, this might be something that could be developed with manufacturers as a sort of video that could be easily distributed. I believe it would need to be something that could also attract "new blood" into the hobby and not just "preach to the converted".

4. News & Views could of course be made into a fuller magazine and distributed more widely. But remember, that it is a members magazine, for you to get involved in, it is paid for mainly by members (with some paid advertising) and it is edited, prepared and distributed by a volunteer on your committee (presently me). I have felt for a long time that the industry needs a magazine to get to the general public as well as people like us who are already converted to the hobby. The Home Wine and Beer Maker is sent out through Homebrew shops, so in my view it is not going to attract too many new hobbyists, and we need new, younger, blood coming into our hobby. This whole topic is one that is very close to my heart and one that I have discussed with quite a few individuals in the industry over the last few months, so I would particularly like to hear any more ideas or views on this subject. Maybe we can find a way forward.

5. A Web-site could be a useful tool to promote the hobby and it is something I would like the committee to try and make some progress on during the next year or so. Any ideas, write to me.

Well, I have given my first thoughts above, I think it's a thought provoking

letter so let me get responses from more of you. The committee cannot act in a vacuum, Any ideas?

**Alan Eldret - Chairman and N & V Editor**

**NATIONAL IDEAS**

Chris Randall and Mike Bedwell have written with a few ideas about the social side of the National, and whilst they mentioned in their letter that they feel it is an expensive weekend with the Conference tickets, wine tasting, fuel, accommodation etc. they nevertheless put up the following ideas:

1. Provide plastic Union Jack hats and flags and get the band/disco to play some old favourites (always gets the people going). Guide price is £73 for 150 of each.
2. Have a punch or barrel on the go during the evening.
3. Decorate the hall a bit.
4. Put out nuts and/or crisps on the tables.
5. Have a spot prize waltz.
6. What about a Karaoke spot, or is that asking for trouble?
7. Get a decent Band/Disco or both.

Just a few ideas, most of which probably wouldn't work but maybe provide food for thought.

**Chris Randall & Mike Bedwell**  
Editor. *Thanks for the ideas, I hope it prompts others to write with their view. See my comments elsewhere about some of the things we are starting to change.*

**Steffi - The Wine Steward No. 10**



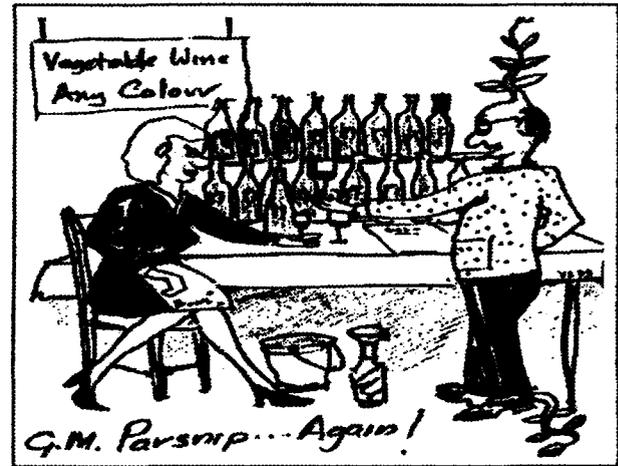
**THE COUNTY BEERMAKERS.**

I'm sure that like me, you all thought that the County Beer-makers meant Essex County. Have I got news for you.

The club was named from the fact that it originated at a meeting in the County Arms, a public house in Hyams Park, in something like 1978. Currently I understand they have about 16 members of which our own beer-making experts, who shall be nameless, form part. Irrespective of the fact that it's not quite as grand a title as I thought, there's little doubt that the membership does include the best beer-makers in Essex.

*Editor: I found this in "The Leytonian" and it brought back memories of my Essex days, when I was also a member of County Beer-makers. May they Prosper. Any other stories about your Club beginnings?*

Steffi - The Wine Steward No. 11

Vic Castle  
Bournemouth Wine Circle**N.A.W.B. INSURANCE**

One of the many advantages of joining NAWB is the competitive price for insurance held under the NAWB umbrella. Has your federation or circle ever considered what would happen if a club event went wrong. With Health and Safety laws predominant in all walks of life it is true to say everybody takes reasonable care to prevent accidents, but unfortunately they still happen and sometimes with devastating effects such as:-

- Outbreak of food poisoning
- Somebody trips over an extension lead
- Club Money is stolen
- Loss of trophies

These are just a few, but in the present time with court claims going through the roof, if an insurance policy has not been taken out to cover them, the onus falls onto the committee. ie The committee stand to be sued for thousands of pounds - "Is your committee willing to take this risk?"

Insurance through NAWB for the 1998/1999 period cost each federation with a membership of up to 20 circles £200.00 and for each circle over 20 an extra £7 per circle, which is very competitive.

This covers

- A Public Liability**  
Federation and or Circle to the limit of £2,000,000.00 including
  - i food and drink poisoning risk
  - ii Member to member liability
- B Money**  
Loss of money up to £500.00 including damage to any personal effects in the course of theft.
- nb This can be increased if needed for a little extra premium.
- C All Risks**  
Loss and damage to cups, trophies and for official regalia belonging to insured up to £10,000.00

If you are interested in the above, get your Federation to join NAWB, this can be done through our membership secretary. They can then have access to this very competitive scheme.

Mrs Audrey Atwell  
20 Stable Row  
Priorslee Village  
Telford  
Shropshire TF2 9NW Tel.01952-299501

For insurance, or if you require more details contact the insurance officer

Mrs Kate Edge  
8 Oakdale Ave  
Stanground  
Peterborough PE2 8TA Tel.01733-564982

Under the scheme to date, NAWB have been subsidising the scheme, to the extent that we have not even charged Federations for the direct cost involved in administration of the scheme. We may need to add a small administrative surcharge in future years.

**THE CONVENOR'S DILEMMA**

Pauline our Convenor, was in her room, writing up her notes ready for the Judges and Stewards briefing. A general steward rushed in to tell her that the five fortified wine classes had been laid out on the Show bench allocated to them, but not in the correct class sequence. Judges had already set out their judging gear in strict class number order and didn't particularly want to move. It was not safe to start moving the bottles at so late a stage with so many people around. What do we do?

Pauline did not want to go out and kick up a fuss (for a change), so she decided to reallocate the classes. She did not have all her records to hand, but with what the steward told her, and from her own memory, she did the job and accommodated all the special requests made by the Judges and Stewards.

From the resulting detail below, you come probably understand some of the complexities.

Well that is the story, now is your chance to solve a puzzle that may not be exactly what happened at Scarborough but I'm sure Pauline thinks her problems were almost this bad. (Names are fictitious)

- Judge Brian wanted to judge a class next to his old judging friend from Tyne & Wear.
- Steward Fred wanted a class at the end of the bench, extreme right, by the gangway, so he had quick access to toilets.
- The Judge using the small bottle as a spittoon had a judge immediately on the right using a big bucket as a spittoon, and so was able to empty into that occasionally.
- Judge Nicole had asked to judge Dry Sherry as she had entered the other four classes.
- Judge Jessica brought her own steward, named Bill, with her.
- Steward Jim asked if he could do the Sweet Madeira class, as he had just returned from a holiday in Madeira.
- Judge Julie wanted to judge a class next to her old judging friend from Essex.
- The judge who ended up doing the Port class, had only a small bottle as a spittoon.
- Steward Kitty had supplied a small bucket as a spittoon for her class.
- Judge Jack hails from Cleveland.
- Judge Brian is a Beer judge as well as a Wine Judge, and always uses a pint glass as a spittoon.
- The Liqueurs, that use smaller bottles, had been set out as the middle of the five classes.
- Steward Fred gave a Big bottle to a class next to his to use as a spittoon.
- Steward Paula was surprised that her Judge came from Middlesex.

Question 1: Who judged the Sweet Sherry?

Question 2: Which Judge came from South Yorkshire?

The above is actually a puzzle that I "lifted" from the "Leytonian" magazine, so thanks to Leyton Wine and Beer Circle. I have modified it to be more relevant to our hobby, so let's see how long you take to do it. It should be a doddle for Pauline Pearce with her years of experience. Answer will be in the next issue, There is only one answer.

**Alan Eldret**

**TELFORD 7TH ANNUAL OPEN SHOW**

It was Telford's Seventh Annual Open Show on July 10th this year and is now becoming the highlight on the wine and beer shows calendar with £225.00 cash prize money and 20 classes for exhibitors to compete over.

Once again Telford lived up to their motto - "Wine Making is Friend Making" this is why it becomes an annual Pilgrimage one cannot overlook.

The programme starts at 8.30 with staging of exhibits which as always was very well organised. Judging commenced at 10.15 the adrenaline increasing as the morning progressed. Between 11.30 and 14.00 we were served with a superb lunch which was followed by Judges at the bar and a commercial wine tasting by Cathedral Wines for which tickets were a modest £2.50. This consisted of six wines which were:-

Prospect Hill - Semillon/Chardonnay  
Riesling-Hochgewachs - Riesling  
Riesling-Duarte - Riesling

Sangiovese di Puglia - Italy

Pleno 1997 - Spain

Concha y Toro 1998 - Cabernet Sauv.

The raffle followed with a grand selection of prizes. At 15.45 the presentation of awards took place. The day was rounded off by dancing to Jeff Kestrel with a supper of Finger Lickin' Chicken 'n' Chips and of course washed down with the prize-winning wines and beers. During the course of the evening there was an impromptu tasting of home made beers in another area, this like all unplanned things proved to be a riot but what a way to learn more about beers.

For those of you who are interested in taking part next year information can be obtained from Mrs Audrey Atwell, Tel. 01952 299501. If it is any help, a number of us stayed at a Travel Inn and took a taxi to the evening function.

**Kate Edge**

**PARTY TO CELEBRATE 40 FRUITY YEARS**

Members and guests of the Wakefield and District Amateur Wine and Beer makers Circle had every reason to raise their glasses high and drink long and deep during the evening of Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 1999, for they were attending the Circle's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration at St. Mary's Parish Centre, Horbury Junction (the Circles normal meeting place.)

After a sherry reception, the evening began with a quiz which had been compiled by the secretary, Mrs Kathleen Longley. Later there was a self-service buffet, and members had brought their own wines for the evening. The circle provided sparkling wine for the toasts.

The guests, Mrs Mary Garside, the President of the Yorkshire Federation and Mr Brian Gent, the Chairman of the Yorkshire Federation, who was accompanied by his wife Barbara; were proposed in a toast by Mr Colin Clarke, a Yorkshire Federation beer judge. In reply Mr Brian Gent thanked members for a wonderful evening and congratulated the circle on attaining its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

In proposing a toast to the Circle, Mr Don Poole, a National Wine judge, referred to the founder of the Circle, Mr John Marriott, of Horbury, and that in 1959 it was only the third of its kind in Yorkshire, following those of York and Leeds. The Chairman Mr Michael Mills, in his reply, referred to the aims and ideals of the constitution set by the founder, i. e. "the promotion and encouragement of wine and beer making for pleasure; exchanging visits with other circles and supporting each other when necessary" and said that they still remained firm. He then assisted Mrs Julia Marriott (the widow of the founder) to officially cut the anniversary cake.

The circle is affiliated to the Yorkshire Federation and among its members has two National Wine judges and two Yorkshire Federation Beer judges. For many years the circle has organised and supported wine sections at local horticultural shows.

After each member had received a commemorative glass to mark the occasion, the evening was brought to a rousing conclusion by the singing of Auld Lang Syne.

**Michael Mills – Chairman of Wakefield Wine Circle**

*Hearty congratulations from the committee of N.A.W.B.*

*Let's hope you achieve another 40 years.*

*Any other Clubs or Federations with special anniversaries?*

*Let me know.*

**BLESS THOSE JUDGES**

It was a slow day in Heaven so God phoned the Devil to see what was going on down there.

"It's a slow day here too!" said the Devil.

"Well," said God, "I think a Wine Show would be fun."

"Sounds good," said the Devil, "but why are you calling me? You've got all the best wine makers up there."

"I know," answered God, "but you've got all the Judges!"

From **Margaret Saunders** of Marlow and District Wine Circle. Thanks.

**WINE KITS AND COMPETITIONS**

Kit Wines are excellent for making a wine and beer quickly for home consumption but should they be allowed in competitions other than in a Kit Wine Class? Just as many turned away from making country wines using ingredients from the countryside and started to try imitating the various commercial wines, so there now seems to be a growing number of makers of Kit Wines. These have always made life easier but, at first, did not produce the quality achieved by the traditional home-made wine maker using proper ingredients. However, things have changed and the result from a Kit Wine can be extremely good. Their use is obviously increasing as can be seen from present day journals which are full of details of various kits. There are usually separate classes in a Show for Kit Wines, but many Shows, including The National and New Forest, allow wines and beers made from kits to be entered in all classes, to be judged alongside those made painstakingly in the traditional way. This did not matter when the results from kits was not all that good but now, when the quality is so high, the question must be asked whether this should be allowed. Whilst never being a big wine maker (I left that to my wife) some years ago I did make a lot of beer. Fortunately the Judges seemed to like this and I was rewarded with quite a few Firsts including at the Dorset Federation Shows. I must confess that, having put in every effort, including choosing the right mixture of hops and ingredients, doing the mashing and other necessary but time consuming jobs, I would have been rather annoyed if someone had been allowed to beat me who had made his/her beer by just following the simple instructions from a kit. Perhaps I would have been wrong. However, ours is a hobby requiring patience, time and skill. Are we in danger in sacrificing these with Wine Kits? What do you think? I believe that one of the purposes of this journal is to give the opportunity for all of us to air our views. Therefore please air yours by writing to me and I will try to summarise your comments in the next issue.

*Editor: Lifted from "The Aperitif" written by Editor Ian, thanks. I thought worth airing here and let me have any thoughts you have.*

**CHRIS RANDALL SENT ME THIS NOTE**

I enclose a cartoon that was in our local village paper to which, needless to say, I have written to the Editor in no uncertain terms! Unfortunately, you cannot reprint it but I thought you, and possibly the committee, might be interested to see what we are up against. Members of my club committee have seen it and they are all going to contact the Editor through the "web". It just annoyed me to think that everyone around the country is trying so hard to keep the hobby going and then the attached is printed. Kings Langley itself has a Wine guild so hopefully will respond to it also.

*Editors note—The cartoon shows an enthusiastic wine-maker describing a torturous collection of Blackberries, and a complex making of wine that turns out foul. The observer then goes and buys cheap commercial. I agree with Chris's concern, we are often the butt of cheap jokes, I'd like to hear from you all on how we can turn the tables.*

**THE NIGHTMARE THAT CONTINUED**

Jack, being very rational  
Had already prepared his wines for the  
National,

But, the night before the day  
Sleep just would not come his way.

But eventually he was dreaming  
Although he became near to screaming  
As nightmares kept on coming  
The effect was really numbing

He dreamt he saw his bottle  
On the edge starting to wobble  
Then staying upright, it changed shape  
At this he really had to gape

Returning to a bottle proper  
He next thought he had come a cropper  
When he saw his white wine turn blue  
Now what was he going to do ?

But back to white it quickly turned,  
Yet, more problems he quickly learned  
For now the wine with slugs was dense  
Could he decant before judging  
commenced ?

At last thankfully came the Dawn  
And up he rushed as was his norm  
Then straight to his wine room door  
To make certain his wine was still pure

Yes, there it stood in all its glory  
And he quickly pictured the story  
Of his gaining , "Best in Show"  
The thought alone gave him a glow

But then it happened, sad to say  
He grabbed his bottle in an awkward  
way

It slipped and fell down on the floor  
Broken glass and loose wine galore

This year then, Jack will not be a  
winner

As all his other wines are tasteless and  
thinner

So, whilst we leave him suffering at  
this blow

It's your chance to win at the next  
National Show.

**Ian Bowen-Ashwin**  
*Editors, thanks.*

**MEMBERS OF NAWB**

**Your chance to win £25!**

Your name will be entered  
into a free Draw if you:

**Recruit a New Member**

or

**Recruit a lapsed member  
(pre 1997)**

or

**Recruit a New Circle**

or

**Recruit a New Federation**

The Draw will take place in Weston  
on Saturday 15th April 2000  
Send completed application form at  
back of this issue to Audrey Atwell  
(before 22<sup>nd</sup> March)

**Got A Caravan? A Mobile Home? Or A Tent?  
Would you like to use it at the 2000 National?**

For Further Information Contact:

**Mike Bedwell & Chris Randall**

123 Primrose Hill, Kings Langley, Herts. WD4 8HX

Telephone: 01923 263956

**STANDING ORDER MANDATE**

In order to save time and cost for your Association, and your own time, we strongly recommend that you use this standing order mandate for your annual membership payments. Please fill in the form below and return it to your Bank or Building Society, and, notify the Membership Secretary that you are paying by this method.

Please fill in the areas as indicated. Don't forget that it's £10 for single membership and £15 for joint membership. Thank you for using this method.

To: The Manager  Bank/Building Society,  Branch

Please pay: Beneficiary's Bank: Royal Bank of Scotland Plc, Llandudno Branch  
Sort Code: 16-24-14  
Beneficiary's Name: National Association of Wine and Beer Makers  
Beneficiary's Account Number: 11857449

The sum of: £  Quote my Membership No.

Date of payment: ..... and annually thereafter on 1st July

Please debit my account: Sort Code  -  -   
Account Number   
Name of Account Holder(s)

SIGNATURE (S) \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**MASTERS OF WINE?**

The trade magazine *Harpers* recently reported the result of a blind tasting test for Masters of Wine and wine merchants, buyers for supermarkets and wine shops. There were five different wines to be tasted, four of which had been injected with a series of faults. Out of the 91 experts 30 failed to get any answers right and 36 only scored one. 19 scored two, 5 scored 3 and only one scored 4 out of the 5 possible points; this was a second year Master of Wine employed by the West Country wine merchants, Averys. The nearest to him was a buyer from Marks and Spencer and an adviser to Sainsbury and Tesco, but, for the others -!!!, Of the one wine that had not been contaminated 67 of the 91 tasters thought there were faults with it, judging it to be one of the wines tampered with. As has been seen, not one of the 'experts' gained full marks. We give below a letter suggesting the reason for this from a Mr. Maurice Wilson of Uppminster ( a NGWBJ) which he wrote to the Daily Mail:-

I couldn't help but be amused at the embarrassing experience suffered by a number of distinguished Masters of Wine who failed, at a blind tasting, to identify wines which had been contaminated with acetic acid, a musty bottle, the chemical associated with , corked wine or had simply been allowed to oxidise. I should point out that Masters of Wine, as buyers of wines for supermarkets and other outlets, are never offered bad or 'off' wines by any self-respecting vintner who aspires to make a living by selling his product. They are, therefore, ill-equipped to identify the faults which had been introduced into the wines they were asked to assess. However, members of the National Guild of Wine and Beer Judges ( NGWBJ ) would have spotted all those

faults. We assess only home-made wines at the various shows held all around the country. Though the standard of amateur wine-making is high, mistakes are sometimes made and it's our task to help and encourage a higher standard of winemaking. To this end, membership of the Guild is restricted to experienced amateur wine-makers, those who have consistently won awards and are able to pass a strict examination. .

*Editor. I "lifted" the above from "The Aperitif" Dorset Fed. Journal.*

**CHRISTMAS PRESENT IDEA**

A lot of us are critical of Wine and Beer kits on the basis of quality, and there are some that believe that as quality does improve, then perhaps the skills in our Craft will diminish. Now I'm a firm believer that kits are a way to encourage new starters into our hobby, or even the making of wine from cartons of juice can give good results. Once a person has started the hobby, then they will be in a better position to see the benefits of either "Tweaking" kits to improve their results, or making the further step to prepare their own ingredients to a variety of recipes.

Therefore, why not look at giving a kit, or some equipment, to a relative or friend this Christmas, particularly if they do not presently make their own wine or beer. If we all try to get just one new person started in making wine or beer, even in a small way, then we can help to build our hobby. Concentrate on quality kits so as not to discourage newcomers, and why not help them make their first brew. They might invite you to help drink it. I think it's Telford Wine Circle that has the motto "Winemaking is Friend making". Let's all rekindle our enthusiasm and encourage the hobby.

**NAWB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM**

Please note membership fees are due by 1st July each year. A Standing Order Mandate Form is available overleaf.

**INDIVIDUAL OR JOINT APPLICANTS**

Surname .....  
 Title (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms etc.) .....  
 Fore names (First person) .....  
 Fore names (Second person) .....  
 Address .....  
 .....  
 County ..... Post Code .....  
 Telephone No .....  
 Club/Circle/Guild .....

Membership Nos. if known  fee enclosed

**CIRCLES AND FEDERATIONS**

Name of Circle or Federation .....  
 Details of representative and position, for all NAWB correspondence  
 Name .....  
 Position .....  
 Address .....  
 .....  
 County ..... Post Code .....  
 Telephone No. ....

Membership No. if known  fee enclosed

**Membership fees :**  
 Individuals/Circles/Federations £10  
 Husband and Wife or partners £15  
 Life membership only available for individuals and couples and is ten times the current annual fee.

**Cheques or PO's payable to NAWB**  
 All Membership correspondence and payments to :  
**Audrey Attwell NGWBJ - NAWB Membership Secretary**  
 20, Stable Row, Priorslee Village, Telford, Shropshire TF2 9NW  
 Telephone No. 01952 299501 PLEASE ENCLOSE A S.A.E.