



NEWS & VIEWS

**February
2024**

The Journal of The National Association of Wine & Beer Makers (Amateur)

CHAIRMAN'S & EDITOR'S CHATTER

May I start by saying that I hope you have all enjoyed a happy new year with airlocks bubbling with wine and beer production.

Welcome to your new style "News & Views". Sadly reducing membership without a reduction in the cost of printing paper copies of News & Views, together with increased postal costs means it is no longer cost effective to continue to send you printed copies in the post.

So, we now go online with attachments to e-mails. We have changed to a simple A4 portrait layout so that those who wish to print their copies to add to their collections can print them easily.

This does have some advantages as we will be able to send you information whenever there is a need, rather than having to wait until there is sufficient to be worth going to print. We will still be able to include articles that members send in, and I hope, perhaps in vain, that more of you will submit articles. Sadly the only items which can be described as articles in this issue is a piece about Chocolate Rye IPA from last years National Friday tasting which I have written myself and a very interesting article by Bernard Lamb comparing home made and commercial wines which goes to prove how good we are at making our wines and beers. It is just a shame that more youngsters do not join our organisation and hobby.

This issue is mainly concerned with our forthcoming National Show where I hope to see as many of you as possible. We return to Coventry, the problems with the hotel two years ago are in the past, as there were significant improvements last year and we hope that continues this year.

All the information you need about bookings, menus and bottle entries can be found on the next couple of pages. The online forms are very easy, I have used them myself but you can still use pen and paper if you wish.

Charles Hill

NATIONAL SHOW ARRANGEMENTS

The National show this year will again be held at the Britannia Royal Court Hotel on Tamworth Road, Keresley Coventry. It is a little later than usual this year, it will be held on Friday to Sunday April 19th—21st. All the information can be found very easily on our website nawb.org.uk

For those who are not familiar with websites at the welcome page read down to the third paragraph and click on the words [please see the details on our show page](#). This will take you to the page which has all the information you need to know about the show.

Getting your copy of the Show schedule

The third paragraph on this page is headed “Information about the show”. To see the full schedule you will need to click on [Show Schedule](#), This is a 14 page document with full details of the show.

Booking your Hotel Room

The most important thing to do now is to book your hotel room as this must be done no later than Friday 23rd February 2024. You may be able to book after this date but rooms will not be guaranteed and the rates quoted may not apply. Online bookings are preferred to use this method click on [Hotel Room Booking form](#). Simply complete the form, the dates of the show are already filled in but if you wish to stay extra nights they can be changed. When completed simply click on the submit button at the bottom of the form. If you cannot or choose not to use the online form you can obtain paper copies of the form in either word or pdf formats. Paper copies will need to be sent to the hotel with a copy to the Show Liaison Officer You will be required to make payment for your room when checking into the hotel.

Your Menu Options

You have a few days more to decide your menu choices for Saturday Night. Menu choices are required by Saturday March 2nd. Again online bookings are preferred, on the Annual Show Page click on [Menu Choices form](#), fill out your choices, remembering to list any allergies you may have and click on the submit button. Again for those not using online forms paper versions in word and pdf formats are available

Bottle Entries and Conference Bookings

You have until Wednesday April 3rd to sort out your entries but I am sure Elaine would appreciate it if those of you who are well prepared and already know what you will be entering send them in earlier. Again you can do this online by clicking on [Show Entry and Conference Booking form](#). I am sure this will be just as easy to use as the above online forms but I have not used this one as I still have some brewing to do. Paper copies in word and pdf versions are available.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

For most of you the weekend will start when you arrive at the hotel with your bottles, bottle reception is between 1:30pm and 5:00pm on Friday 19th, those who arrive early may be surprised to find the show room is already pretty full as the Committee and a few others have set things up and already staged their bottles. You will need to book your dinner on arrival. Please note there will be no tombola this year.

From 8:00pm onwards there will be a tasting of wines and beers in the Windsor Suite. This is where you can taste the best alcohol in the hotel as all the wines and beers have been made by our members. The beer theme is beers from around the world, at the present time we expect to have a Belgian Witbier, a Polish Grodziskie (it is a smoked wheat beer) an American Pale Ale, a Dutch Stout, a Czech Pilsner, an Eisbock and a Ukrainian Imperial Stout.

Wines will include a sparkling wine, a dry white (Banana/Rhubarb/Elderflower), a pineapple mead, a rosé, a medium dry damson wine and sweet wine as yet unknown.

We will have voting slips for you to vote for the best beer and the best wine, so you have plenty to taste to send everyone to bed happy.

For Judges and Stewards it is an early start on Saturday morning, others may have a lie in. At 8:45 we have the Judges and Stewards briefing and judging should commence at 8:45. Hopefully judging should be completed by 1:00pm.

At 2:00pm Audrey will present a “Call My Bluff” commercial wine tasting. This is included in your Full Conference Ticket. This proved so popular last year that we have decided to repeat it. I am sure all our members will be old enough to remember the television programme but just in case it works like this. You will get wines to taste and after each wine has been tasted you will hear three experts tell you about the wine, one will be telling the truth the other two will be lying. Last year three men told us about the wines but I understand this year that we will have three ladies trying their hand at telling porkies. I cannot possibly comment.

At around 3:15pm we will present trophies to the class winners, this will be followed by the collection of your show bottles.

At 7:15pm we have the Dinner Dance (dress code is smart casual, dinner jackets or lounge suits may be worn if you wish). You may drink your home-made wines and beers throughout the meal. The hotel’s corkage charge is based upon our consuming homemade wines and beers plus the commercial tasting on Saturday afternoon. We must comply with the terms of our contract so no commercial drinks are allowed. This also applies to bottles of wine won in the raffle.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting takes place on Sunday April 21st 2024 at the Royal Court Hotel, Tamworth Road, Keresley, Coventry Full details of this will be sent out in a later newsletter.

CHOCOLATE RYE IPA

At the Friday night beer tasting last year the beer which scored the most votes was my Chocolate Rye IPA so for anyone interested in having a go at a rather unusual beer here is how it was made.

Mashing commenced on 22nd January 2023 though the water was boiled the previous evening, one teaspoon of gypsum and half a teaspoon of Epsom salt was added to the mash liquor. Rye beers are intended to be dry so I chose a low mash temperature of 63°C.

Malt & Hops (for 10 litres)

2.4 Kg	Maris Otter Pale Malt (Warminster 4.5 EBC)
500 g	Pale Rye Malt (EBC 5)
100 g	Chocolate Rye Malt (Weyermann 500-800 EBC)
100g	Torrefied Wheat (4 EBC)
10g	Chinook hops (USA 13.40%AA) start of boil
10g	Citra hops (USA 14.20% AA) start of boil
10g	Cascade hops (USA 8.20%) after 45 minutes
5g	Chinook hops at switch off
5g	Citra hops at switch off
5g	Cascade hops at switch off
25g	Amarillo hops (USA 8.33% AA) for dry hopping

Irish moss was added 15 minutes from the end of the boil. The original gravity of the beer was 1.070. Mangrove Jacks M44 US West Coast Yeast was used for the fermentation. Dry hopping was for five days. The beer remained stubbornly very cloudy, a lot of modern beers are acceptable cloudy these days but Rye IPAs are normally clear so I used finings. On February 12th 2023 the beer was clear with a final gravity of 1.015 when it was primed and bottled. **Charles Hill**

NOSTALGIA TIME

For the 2023 show, the Committee felt it was time to reduce the number of classes at the National, and sadly the reduced number of Federations and Circles meant it was time for those classes to go. The trophies for the circle classes were renovated and allocated to other classes. On the next page I list all the winners of the circle trophies from inception of the trophy, there are some wonderful circle names such as "Travel & Savour Together Society" I suppose the star circle has to Nottingham with 7 wins in the wine class and 5 in the beer. Below are winners of the Federation beer class. Wouldn't it be wonderful if these circles and federations were all going strong today.

Yorkshire Federation	1976, 1980, 1992, 2000
Midland Federation	1977
South West Counties	1978, 1981, 1985, 1988, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2007
Northumbria	1979
North Humberside	1982, 1984
Middlesex	1983, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2018
Beds & Herts	1986, 1987, 1993, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2010, 2017
London East	1989, 1990, 1991, 1999
Dorset	1998
Central Counties	2001, 2008, 2009, 2015, 2019, 2022
Essex	2005

A BIT OF HISTORY—WINNERS OF THE CIRCLE TROPHIES

Year	Mareoni Guild Trophy	NAWB Beer Trophy
1964	Marconi Wine Guild	
1965	Tally Ho Winemakers Guild	
1966	Birmingham & Dist Wine Circle	
1967	Birmingham & Dist Wine Circle (2)	
1968	Faversham Amateur Winemakers Guild	
1969	Twickenham Amateur Winemakers Guild	
1970	West Kent Winemakers Club	
1971	Epsom Downs Amateur Winemakers Guild	
1972	Wakefield & Districy Amateur Wine Circle	
1973	Wellingborough Wine Circle	
1974	Bexleyheath & District Wine Circle	
1976	Travel & Savour Together (Epsom Reg) Soc.	
1977	East Grinstead & District Wine Circle	
1978	Nottingham Winemakers Association	
1979	Twickenham Amateur Winemakers Guild (2)	Layton Wine & Beer Circle
1980	Nottingham Winemakers Association (2)	SDABS
1981	Old Bexley Wine Makers	Cranford Ales
1982	Nottingham Winemakers Association (3)	SDABS (2)
1983	Nottingham Winemakers Association (4)	SDABS (3)
1984	Phoenix	Tyneside Nationals
1985	Exeter Wine Circle	SDABS (4)
1986	Tynemouth	Tynemouth
1987	Nottingham Winemakers Association (5)	SDABS (5)
1988	Ace of Clubs Wine Circle	Layton W & B Circle (2)
1989	Phoenix (2)	Nottingham,
1990	Burbage Wine Makers	Tynemouth (2)
1991	Bexleyheath & District Wine Circle (2)	Tyneside National (2)
1992	Mirfield Wine Circle	White Lion Wine & Beer Guild
1993	Exeter Wine Circle (2)	Ilford District W & B Circle
1994	Maldon Wine Circle	County Beermakers
1995	Poole Wine Circle	Tothill
1996	Tynemouth (2)	Ilford District W & B Circle (2)
1997	Teignmouth & Dawlish Wine Circle	Layton W & B Circle (3)
1998	Nottingham Winemakers Association (6)	Layton W & B Circle (4)
1999	Tynemouth (3)	Layton W & B Circle (5)
2000	White Lion Wine & Beer Guild	New Ash Green W & B Circle
2001	Old Bexley Wine Makers (2)	Highcliff
2002	White Lion Wine & Beer Guild (2)	Luton Amateur Wine Guild
2003	Tynemouth (4)	Buckhurst Hill W & B Circle
2004	Hull & District Winemakers Guild	Luton Amateur Wine Guild (2)
2005	Phoenix (3)	Luton Amateur Wine Guild (3)
2006	Peterborough Wine & Beer Makers	Greenford Park
2007	Bolton	Chesterfield
2008	Phoenix (4)	County Beermakers (2)
2009	Phoenix (5)	Nottingham (2)
2010	Lincoln	Nottingham (3)
2011	Nottingham Winemakers Association (7)	Nottingham (4)
2012	Bolton (2)	Nottingham (5)
2013	Peterborough Wine & Beer Makers (2)	Ware Wine & Beer Circle
2014`	Ware Wine & Beer Circle	Greenford Park (2)
2015	Bolton (3)	Eastwood
2016	Bolton (4)	County Beermakers (3)
2017	Ware Wine & Beer Circle (2)	County Beermakers (4)
2018	Colchester	Ware Wine & Beer Circle (2)
2019	Ware Wine & Beer Circle (3)	County Beermakers (5)
2022	Peterborough Wine & Beer Makers (3)	Lincoln W & B Circle

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR FUNDRAISING OFFICER

The tombola will NOT be running this year. The Committee agreed that the funds raised do not justify the time and effort put in by the small, though very dedicated team of helpers.

Instead we will be having "Irish Bingo" on the Friday evening. This takes only a few minutes and will supplement funds raised by the raffle which is held on both nights.

I have purchased some really good bargains already, but if you are willing to donate a raffle prize, please see me or any Committee member at the show.

Finally - thank you in advance - your generosity will help our organisation to survive for another year. Thank you so much for your support.

Cheers

Audrey

COMPARING COMMERCIAL AND HOME-MADE WINES

The Central London Wine Club meets nearly every Wednesday at the Civil Service Club, New Scotland Yard, with about 10 to 24 members at each session. They include five with the WSET diploma, one with WSET level 3 (distinction, me) and are serious tasters of commercial wines, often belonging to more than one tasting group. I am the only winemaker of any kind, home or commercial. Each member scores each wine out of seven and is called upon (unless there are too many people) to comment on each wine. At the end, before prices are announced, a show of hands is used to calculate an average score out of seven for each wine, and some tasters give low marks much of the time, even for very prestigious wines.

The scoring scale is: 1, Faulty; 2, Unpleasant; 3, OK; 4, Fair; 5, Good; 6, Excellent; 7, Wonderful. Marks on the same wine often vary widely, in one notorious case, a Macon Village 2007, from 1 to 7! If a wine scores an average of 6.0 or more, it goes on the Roll of Honour. I occasionally put in a home-made wine and was very disappointed when my Orange Wine Sweet scored 5.9, just missing the Roll of Honour, but still beating many expensive and well-known commercials. Dr John Harrison's Sherry/Madeira scored a very good 5.8.

My home-made wine beat all 10 Central Italy wines (top score, 5.4), all 10 Tuscan wines (5.8), regional France (5.0), Veuve Cliquot NV Yellow Label Champagne and six others (only 4.3), 7 out of 9 from St. Estèphe (tying with Château Montrose 2000, £170; beaten by Ch. Cos d'Éstournel 1985, £180, 6.3), it beat 6 out of 8 from Margaux (tying with Ch. Palmer 1979, £350; beaten by Ch. Margaux 1986, £650, 6.4), beat 9 out of 10 Chilean wines, tying with one, beat all 10 French older vintages, including Ch. Climens Barsac 1996, £70, 5.2, Ch. Beaucastel Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007, £90, 5.4, plus wines from Nuits St. George, Meursault, Macon Villages and Pouilly Fuissé, all 10 from South Africa, all 10 from International Pinot Noir, 8 out of 9 from Australia, losing to Lenton Brae 2011 (Margaret River Cabernet), £27, 6.0, all 10 from Virginia, all 10 from Albania, beat 8 out of 9 South African Blends (losing to Glenelly Estate Reserve 2015, £20, 6.2), all 10 from South West France, 8 out of 9 from South Australia (losing to Schild Ben Schild Reserve Shiraz 2012, 6.0), and beat all 10 New Zealand Varietals.

In October 2023, we had very prestigious wines from Pauillac. It was a record evening for high scores, with my wine's score losing to three wines which went on the Roll of Honour: Ch. Pichon

Lalande 1988, £165, 6.3, Ch. Lynch Bages 1990, £420, 6.3, Ch. Pichon Baron 1990, £384, 6.2. My score did however beat Ch. Grand Puy La Coste 2005, £100, 5.6, and Ch. Grand Puy Ducasse 2000, £65, 5.7. In November 2023, we had 12 Clarets from 1995 and 1996, when the Ch. Latour 1995, £575, scored a massive 6.7, but my 5.9 was better than most of them, even ones costing more than £200. It even beat one of the two best and most expensive St. Emilion wines, Ch. Cheval-Blanc, 1995, £440, only 5.3. In a tasting of Warre's vintage ports from 1960 upwards, only the 1960, £395, 6.3, beat my score. At one group visit to an Italian restaurant, my Golden Sweet Wine 2020, scoring 5.8, came second to a 2016 Barolo, 5.9.

My orange wine which beat so many commercials was Orange Sweet, 2019, G = 25, bottled in 2021 after some orange peel soaking. How well did it do in the 2023 National? Not very well! In the Citrus base, sweet, class, it came nowhere, with the comments: *Poor nose. Unpleasant taste.* The comments were unsigned, a bad fault. In the Fruit white sweet class, it fared better. Charles Hill gave it a VHC, putting legibly: *strong nose and palate. Nice wine.* (see note below-Editor)

These results clearly show that home-made wines can beat extremely prestigious commercial ones, even ones costing several hundred pounds. As results at the 2023 National show, I am a mediocre winemaker, with best wine places thirds and fourths, so wines from one of our best winemakers would do even better.

The University College Wine Club is a very serious group, no students, membership by invitation only; several members have the WSET Diploma. All wines are assessed blind, brought by members on the selected subject. On 19th December it was Madeiras and sweet Sherries, with twelve covered bottles. It was not always easy to judge which were sweet Sherries and which were Madeiras and I did not always get that right. There were two wines judged to be clearly the best, both Madeiras.

One was D'Oliveira's Sercial 1989, now costing £150 a bottle. The other was a half-bottle which received these comments before the cover was removed: *Sweet Madeira, mature vintage Madeira* (vintage Madeiras are made less often than vintage ports, only in great years, and must be matured for at least 20 years) *or Colheita* (single years; must be aged at least six years); *a complex, very interesting wine with some age; will live a long time; excellent nose, very complex; lovely sweet mouthful like a Japanese plum wine; delicious; very large complex bouquet; sweet but not very sweet, balanced.* The other nine people were absolutely astonished when I revealed that it was homemade! It was of course absolutely priceless and the only bottle ever made. It was from ends of glasses from when I judged the Madeira class at the NAWB show in 2016. The bottle was only two-thirds full and the wine, being Madeira, had suffered no bad oxidation from that air space. I was asked which of the four noble Madeira grapes it was made from, so I said, "None, but it contains a lot of dried fruits." It really did taste like a classic mature Madeira, so I congratulate all the makers who entered that class in 2016. I really enjoyed that evening, listening to people's comments, with them not knowing that it was home-made.

Bernard Lamb

Editors note: *I remember the class, I had entered it and after removing cover slips my wine was in the finalisation. So, in accordance with modern practice I asked another judge, Dave Pulley to do the finalisation. Dave agreed all six wines were very good but eventually brought three forward, then he spent quite a time deciding between two of them. Eventually he told me that those two wines were second and third, the one he had been ignoring before placing it first was my entry. I suspected it was, as I recognised the gooseberries. He left me to place 4th, 5th & 6th. **Charles Hill***