



# Wales and West Federation of Winemaking Circles

Newsletter

January 2009

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## From the Editor's Wine Glass

A Happy New Year from the Wales and West Federation committee.

Unfortunately, we have to start the new year with the news that another circle has ceased to function. This time it is Bradford-on-Avon circle that has decided to call it a day.

It is a familiar story. Although there is still plenty of home wine making and brewing going on (as is shown by the number of expensive kits that are on the market), the younger people who are doing the home brewing are not interested in joining wine circles. So if your circle is one of the lucky ones with younger members, nurture them. And if your neighbouring circles are struggling, give them your support as often as you can.

As the saying goes; "When it's gone, it's gone."

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### Pensford Wine Fest

On a happier note, the first Pensford Wine Fest will be held at the Pensford Memorial Hall on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2009. The event will include a tutored tasting of six wines in the late afternoon and an evening session when

30 individually-selected wines will be available for tasting and entertainment will be provided by a "folk and jazz" trio.

For more information, contact Terry Phillips on 01761 490426 or visit the Festival web site at [www.pensfordwinefest.co.uk](http://www.pensfordwinefest.co.uk).

All proceeds from the event will go towards replacing the roof of the Memorial Hall.

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I have been told that there is a new Home Brew outlet in Weston Village, Bath. It's called J.T. Hardware, and you will find them on the Shopping Parade. I understand they stock quite a comprehensive range of home brewing items.

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In this Newsletter you will find:

- More information about the 2009 Festival;
- News from Bath, Bradford-on-Avon, Coleford, City of Gloucester, Newent, Newport and Timsbury Wine Circles and the South Western Counties Federation.

## News from the Federation

### Festival 2009

The planning is proceeding for the 2009 Festival. The programme is almost ready; there are just a few loose ends to be tidied up before it can be sent to Sand Bay for inclusion in the Festival guide.

### Brochures

It seems that the brochures sent to some individuals have been late in arriving. The Committee apologise for this and hope that by the time you read this all those who attended the 2008 Festival will have received their brochures and booking forms for 2009.

If there are any who have not received their brochures, or if there are members of your circle who have not been before and want to come this year, please contact Nobby Clark on 0117 9618002 for additional copies.

### Show Entries

Entries for the Show have been slow so far, so if you are not waiting to see how successful you are at the National before entering, Bridget Berrecloth is poised ready to receive your entry sheets and send you your labels.

When making your entries, please note the changes to the classes that I mentioned in the last Newsletter, particularly the changes to the ranges of Original Gravities for the beer classes.

Because this is the 45<sup>th</sup> Festival, the rosettes and collars are different to mark the occasion and are worth competing for even more than usual.

### Cookery Judges

Ron Williams is still looking for judges for the Cookery classes. Contact Ron on 01685 876121 if you think that you can help.

### Tombola

Carol Coombs has asked me to remind you to please include something for the Tombola stall when you pack your bags for the Festival weekend.

### 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries

The committee is looking for couples who are celebrating their 45<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary in 2009. If you are, please contact me or any member of the committee before the Festival.

### Member Circle Contacts

I have not been told of any changes to member circle contacts since the last newsletter.

### Circle Secretaries:

An up-to-date list of contacts for circles that are affiliated members of the Wales and West Federation is included with this Newsletter. Please destroy previous issues of the contact list.

## News from the Circles

### Bath Wine Circle

Bath Wine Circle's Annual Wine Show was held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and attracted just over 500 entries. Once again, from the general comments received from the judges, high standards in wine and beer making were still being achieved. Trophies for each of the 33 individual classes, plus the 9 overall classes, were presented to the winners by the Circle's President, Mrs Monica Abel.

The Invitation Trophy for the Circle (excluding Bath) gaining most points in the Open Classes was once again won by Stroud, the current Champions, who beat off competition from five other circles. An Inter-Circle Competition was also held during the day, with Bath winning the President's Silver Salver.

Stan Matthews was Bath's Master Winemaker for 2008.

With regard to the Circle's Charity fund raising, a cheque for £3,000 was presented to a representative of the Bath Cats & Dogs Home at the Circle's December Meeting, this being a record amount raised. It was achieved by a variety of fund raising events, including a Sponsored Walk, a "Singalong/Dance" Evening, Harvest Home and a Charity/Halloween Dance.

The picture shows the presentation of the cheque to the Bath Cats and Dogs Home at the December meeting.



The Circle has now donated more than £25,000 to Charity over the years and wishes to thank members of other circles who have helped to raise this sum by supporting the various Charity events.

During 2009 the Circle will be supporting the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance.

The Circle's St Valentine's Dance will be held at Culverhay School on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2009. Please contact Pat Beswick on 01225 315388 for more details.

## **Bradford-on-Avon Wine Circle**

I received the following email from Sam Williams:

"It is with great regret that I am having to write to you to inform you that, as from today (9<sup>th</sup> January 2009) our Club will no longer exist.

We had our A.G.M. last evening, when it was decided the most sensible thing for us, was to fold. I think that all clubs have been experiencing problems for the last few years, and I wish them all the best in their struggle to keep afloat.

I would like to thank the Wales and West, and all those clubs who have supported us in the past.

Good luck to you all.

Very Sincerely, Sam (ex Secretary)"

## **Coleford and District Amateur Winemakers**

Coleford Amateur Winemakers have changed the venue for their monthly meetings again. As from February 2009 they will meet at the Baptist Church Hall, Newland Street, Coleford at 8 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month.

## **City of Gloucester Wine Circle**

Gloucester Wine Circle held their annual Carol Concert at Churchdown School on 18<sup>th</sup> December. As always, there was a good turnout of members of wine circles in and around Gloucester who were entertained throughout the evening by the Frampton-on-Severn Silver Band.

This year, the concert was in aid of the Gloucestershire Air Ambulance and thanks to the generosity of circle members it raised £750 for this good cause.

## **Newent Wine Circle**

In November, Newent Wine Circle, as the winners in 2007, hosted the annual competition for the Lloyd and Walker Challenge Cup. Eight circles took part with each circle having one entry in each of the four classes of red and white dry and red and white social wines. The classes were judged by members of Newent Wine Circle. Musical entertainment

for the evening was provided by Llangrove Ladies Choir.

Stroud and District Wine Circle were the winners with two firsts followed by Cheltenham Amateur Wine Makers and Corinium Wine Circle with equal points, but Corinium were placed second overall on a count-back because they had one first and Cheltenham did not have any firsts. Stroud will be the hosts for the 2009 competition.

In January, Newent were again the hosts when members of City of Gloucester Wine Circle were the visitors for the Jack and Barbara Beech Memorial Trophy. This is a single-class competition for individual members of the two circles.

This year's winners were all from Newent, with Tony Parsons taking first place, followed by Grahame Ford and Jean Haines.

## Newport Wine Circle

The members of Newport Wine Circle would like to thank Porthcawl Wine Circle for a "Grand Evening" at their dance. The food was excellent and there were no complaints from Newport members.

The picture shows circle members on the dance floor.



## Timsbury Wine Society

Our Christmas dance went off very well. We had a horse racing game which our Chairman introduced for the first time, this caused a lot of laughter and amusement. All visiting wine circles and guests took part and some had a prize for winning.

The picture shows Timsbury members in party mood.



Can we also wish Graham Nicholls and his wife Iris a very happy Golden Wedding on January 31st 09. They will be celebrating it at the Congyre Hall with family and friends.

We are having our Ron Ward Trophy wine competition on Saturday March 7th 2009 at the Congyre Hall, 8pm - midnight, dancing to *Tobacco Road*, £6.00. bring your own food, drink and glasses.

The committee has made the decision to go ahead again this year, although

we made a loss last year, as the club wine matches seem to be dying out. We do not want this to happen so please try and support us.

We still have a web site at [www.timsburywinecircle.org](http://www.timsburywinecircle.org) and all details of our programme with news and photos you will find there.

Thank you and all our best wishes for a Happy, Healthy and

Prosperous New Year.

Best wishes, Wendy Treasure,  
Secretary - Timsbury Wine Society

*(Wendy would like me to point out that she has contacted the circles who usually take part in this competition, but if there are any other circles who would like to take part they will be more than welcome. Contact Wendy at 70, Braysdown Lane, Peasedown St. John, Bath, BA2 8HS for more information. – Ed.)*

## South Western Counties 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Festival

The sun shone down on Torbay when the 46<sup>th</sup> Festival took place at the Livermead House Hotel in Torquay on the weekend of the 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> October 2008. Approximately 90 people stayed at the hotel for the two days, enjoying the beautiful weather and the hotel's facilities.

The competition took place on Saturday. There were 583 bottles in 41 classes to be judged as well as jam, cakes and savoury and sweet dishes, which all kept the judges, and the collators of the results, busy.

There was a full programme of events to keep everyone happy; a dance on Friday and Saturday evenings and a wine tasting with the theme of "unusual blends" conducted by Dartmouth Vintners on behalf of "Vinnicombes" of Torquay. This was well attended and enjoyed by all. On the Sunday morning there was a "meet the judges" session, which provided an opportunity for all to question the judges on their decisions and to "get your own back".

Moored in the bay was a Royal Navy cruiser to keep us safe, although we did notice that its guns were trained on the hotel!!

At the Saturday dance, our Chairman, Terry Western, announced the trophy winners who collected their prizes from Federation president David Chelley. The main trophy winners were:

- Plymouth Circle Cup - Mo Western of Mendip;

- Judith Irwin Trophy – Sheila Baker of Mendip;
- Doc Evans Beer Barrel – Mervyn Jones of Milber and Kerswell;
- Duddridge Salver – Tricia Brown of Bridgwater;
- Torquay Ladies Salver - Mo Western of Mendip;
- Torbay Perpetual Rose Bowl – Terry Western of Mendip;
- Forest Friends Trophy – Terry Western of Mendip;
- Torbay Challenge Shield – Mendip;
- Taunton Beer Shield – Torquay Guild;
- Exeter Shield – Bridgwater;
- Top Club Cup – Mendip.

During the evening a presentation was made to Maurice Powell and Dot Annear in recognition of their many years of service as organisers of the Federation's marquee at the Devon County Show. Unfortunately they have now had to retire and as no volunteer has come forward to take over, the Federation will no longer be represented at the Show.

Show organiser Maurice Picken and all the committee are to be congratulated on another successful and enjoyable Festival.

Well that is it for this issue. I hope you have found something to interest you, give you some ideas for your own circle, or maybe to inspire you to tell the rest of the Federation about what your circle is doing.

Don't forget I can accept digital photos of the goings-on in your circle by email. Please send them, in JPEG format, to the email address below.

My thanks for their contributions to:

Doug Webber of Bath

Sam Williams of Bradford on Avon

Mary Davis of City of Gloucester

Marian Nicholson of Newent

Graham Scrivens of Newport

Peter Coombs on behalf of the Pensford Wine Fest

Terry Western of the South Western Counties Federation

Wendy Treasure of Timsbury

The next issue of the Newsletter is due in April 2009. Please send your news to me:

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