



# *Wales and West Federation of Winemaking Circles*

**Newsletter**

**April 2008**

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## **From the Editor's Demijohn**

Spring is here, summer is on its way (we hope) and the wine circles are thinking more about Barbeques and outside events rather than dances. Its all part of the winemakers' social whirl and what is nicer than enjoying the pleasant evening sunshine with a glass of chilled white wine – home made, of course.

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### **Bristol Wine Fair**

Doug Webber tells me that after a few years' break, the Bristol Wine & Food Fair is again being held at the Bristol Harbourside from 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> July. Tickets are £5 in advance.

The event includes:

- tutored and non-tutored tastings of over 600 wines from around the world;
- tutored cheese tastings;
- tastings of the food from the best restaurants in the South West;
- chefs' master classes;

- the opportunity to re-stock your wine cellars from some of the finest local wine merchants.

For more information, visit the Web Site at: [www.bristolwineandfoodfair.co.uk](http://www.bristolwineandfoodfair.co.uk) or contact

Bristol Event Management Ltd  
254 Redcatch Road  
Bristol  
BS4 2HJ

Telephone: 0117 966 3002

It is not until July so you still have time to organize a circle outing.

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### **Pensford Beer Festival**

Another opportunity for a circle outing is the first Pensford beer festival which will be held in Pensford Memorial Hall on the evening of Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July and all day Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July.

Up to 30 ales and some local ciders will be available for tasting. There will be music in the form of jazz on Friday evening and Irish music on Saturday evening.

Tickets are available in advance only from Steve on 01761 490347 or Geoff on 01761 490371. Tickets will not be available on the door.

For more information contact Steve or Geoff or visit [www.pensfordbeerfestival.co.uk](http://www.pensfordbeerfestival.co.uk).

All proceeds will go towards the refurbishment of Pensford Memorial Hall.

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### **Rack Off Magazine**

Rack Off, the free magazine that was edited by Mat Hatton of Pop's Homebrew in Cheltenham, has ceased publication. This magazine was sponsored by several of the homebrew suppliers and one of the suppliers has withdrawn its support. As Mat was not able to obtain alternative sponsorship he has had no option but to close it down.

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Also in this Newsletter are:

- More information about the 2008 Festival;
- News from Bath, Brockworth, and Coleford Wine Circles;
- A report of the North Gloucestershire Inter-Circle Beer Competition;
- A report of a successful winemakers' weekend in Torquay.

## News from the Federation

### 2008 Festival

Arrangements are progressing well for the Festival. The programme of events is nearly complete and the menu for the Gala Dinner has been chosen by the Committee. For the Guest Beer, the Committee were given a list of what was available from the Sand Bay providers. This was reduced to three possibles and Peter Coombs asked Bill Elks, the current Master Beermaker, to select one. You'll be able to enjoy Bill's selection when you get to Sand Bay!

Don't forget that although we are privileged to take our own homemade wines and beers into all parts of the Sand Bay site, this privilege does not extend to commercial soft drinks and to 'nibbles' and other food. Please do not abuse this privilege and if the weather is bad and your circle wishes to hold a group lunch in the Ballroom, please purchase food from the Leaf and Pastry shop.

Bookings are going fairly well, at the time of writing we have just over 400 people booked in. But the entries are going slowly, so its time to put pen to paper. Don't forget that entries close on **1<sup>st</sup> May!**

**Please note:** As there will be groups of children staying at Sand Bay until the Friday morning of the Festival weekend, you will not be able to enter the Holiday Village until the children have left.

### Tombola

Carol Coombs has asked me to remind you to include something for the tombola

stand when you are packing to go to the Festival.

### Member Circle Contacts

#### Bath Wine Circle

The new secretary of Bath Wine Circle is:

Mrs Helen Ashton  
44 Boyd Road  
Saltford  
BRISTOL  
BS31 3AU

Telephone: 01225 872511  
Email: [alfash@stoney-riding.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:alfash@stoney-riding.fsnet.co.uk)

#### East Coker Wine Circle

The secretary of East Coker Wine Circle is:

Mrs Mary Horsley  
19 Turner's Barn Lane  
YEOVIL  
Somerset  
BA20 2LL

Telephone: 01935 471072

## News from the Circles

### Bath Wine Circle

Bath Wine Circle held their Annual General Meeting in March. Monica Abel was elected President for the next two years in place of Pam Matthews; Helen Ashton replaced Monica as Circle secretary.

The supported charity for this year is Bath Cats and Dogs Home who are trying to raise £1 million this year. Bath's contribution started with £385 raised at a Charity Wine Tasting.

### Brockworth Wine Circle

Brockworth Wine Circle are holding their annual Boule and Barbeque day on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at Brockworth Comprehensive School, Mill Lane, Brockworth. The BBQ will be lit for cooking at 12:30 p.m. and the boule competition will start at about 2 p.m.

The cost is £1 per head. Bring your own food for cooking, drinks, glasses etc and a table and chairs (and boules if you have them). Gazebos will be erected to protect you from the scorching June sun!!

Contact Heather or Dillwyn Lewis on 01452 612746 for more information.

### Coleford Amateur Winemakers

Coleford Amateur Winemakers will be holding their Annual Barbeque on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> July at Berry Hill Memorial

Hall from 12 noon until 5:30 p.m. Tickets are £4 per person and are available from Trevor Nicholson on 01600 890652.

### Inter-Circle Beer Competition

The inter-circle beer competition for circles in North Gloucestershire took place at Hucclecote Community Centre on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April.

Competition was for two trophies:

- the Bishops Cleeve Salver for the circle with most points in a group of four classes, Bitter Ale, Lager, Dry Stout and Barley Wine;
- the Cheltenham Trophy for an individual entry in the Bitter Ale class.

The winners of the Bishops Cleeve Salver were City of Gloucester Amateur Winemakers, with Hucclecote Original second and Stroud third.

The winner of the Cheltenham Trophy was Ken Lambert of Stroud, with Ronnie Paul of Hucclecote second and Bill Berrecloth of Brockworth third.

The competition was judged by John Perry, formerly of North Cotswold Beer Makers.

## Torquay Tippers

The 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of April saw the first Torquay Tippers event when a group of 82 Winemakers from Gloucestershire enjoyed a convivial weekend in Torquay at the Livermead House Hotel.

Members of Brockworth, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, Coleford, Gloucester, Hucclecote, The Reddings, Stroud, Swindon Village and West Glevum Wine Circles joined together to enjoy a sociable weekend during which members volunteered to entertain us with a Cabaret-style evening on Friday whilst on Saturday evening we were entertained with a Disco.

The sea front hotel proved excellent in every respect and made us all very welcome. The weather was kind to us and there was ample opportunity for several members to test their new bus passes on the local bus routes.

A feature of the weekend is the Charity Bucket that is placed on the dance floor on Saturday evening. This year's charity was the James Hopkins Trust for severely disabled children in Gloucestershire and once again winemakers demonstrated their generosity by collecting £150 for this worthy cause.

The weekend derives from previous weekends spent at Babbacombe, which had become something of a tradition,

having been regularly held for over 20 years.

The assembled company was pleased to express their gratitude for the sterling efforts of Ken and Jean Draper, Alan and Barbara Dean and John and Dorothy Kerr who, for the last 20 years had organised the event.

This year's event was organised by John and Jan Coleman of Cheltenham Wine Makers (with help from their friends) and the hotel has already been booked for 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> April next year.

A Fancy Dress parade was held on the Saturday Evening with a theme of "The Seaside".

Below you can see a member of the Wales and West Committee trying to drum up some business for a boat trip. Who is it? (Clue: It isn't on the agenda.)



Well that is it for this issue. I hope you have found something to interest you, maybe even to inspire you to tell the rest of the Federation about the events in your circle.

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
- Bill Berrecloth of Brockworth
- John Coleman of Cheltenham

The next issue of the Newsletter is due in July 2008. Please send your news to me:

Trevor Nicholson  
Sunnycroft  
Symonds Yat West  
Ross-on-Wye  
Herefordshire  
HR9 6BJ

Email: [trev.nick@virgin.net](mailto:trev.nick@virgin.net)