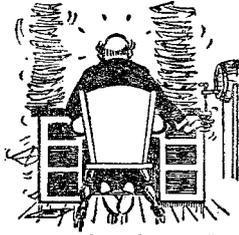


# I. The Amateur Winemaker

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## From the Editors Chair



... Fine wine is always intriguing, good wine will always satisfy, poor wine is uninteresting from the start."  
Allan Sichel on Wine Tasting.



### UP NORTH

If I might be forgiven a personal note for once, the highlight of the last month for me was a visit "up north," to Liverpool, at the invitation of the Merseyside club. It was a warming experience, a hospitable welcome, excellent company, .... and *what* enthusiasm! Representatives of about a dozen societies forgathered, and one rewarding outcome of our time together is that it now looks as if some time this year or next (their plans are still fluid) there will be a big regional one-day show in this area.

Sheffield were already planning something of the sort for the spring of 1964; obviously the enthusiasm is there, and I thought that the entries would undoubtedly be forthcoming too. From this point of view alone the trip was well worth while, and I am sure that other winemakers in the south will join me in wishing our friends in the north every success in this venture. It was a great pleasure to me to meet under one roof so many people with whom I have corresponded so long, and I would like to voice in this column my thanks to Merseyside and all their supporters for the warmth of their welcome .... and apologise to secretary Ken Hill for keeping him up until 4.30 a.m.! Who says winemakers can't talk?



### NATIONAL COMMITTEE'S DECISION

The following Sunday (10 February) saw the meeting of the Committee of the National Conference and Show at Southampton. On the agenda was the thorny question of the venue for 1964. As readers will know, at the annual general meeting at Cheltenham last year there was strong pressure brought to bear that the National should move north, and in the months since then the committee has made fairly widespread and detailed inquiries into the possibilities. Suggested venues:

Harrogate, Buxton, York, Leeds, Sheffield, Blackpool. Blackpool was not seriously considered, in view of the absence of any local Circle, but careful consideration was given to all the others. It may not be generally appreciated by those without experience of the vast amount of work involved in running a "National" that there are certain essential requirements in any "host" town. The committee must be assured of:

1. Adequate hall accommodation for show and conference.
2. Adequate hotel accommodation nearby.
3. A strong local Circle of at least 30-40 member ship with some show experience able and willing to work hard to back the National Committee's efforts, and
4. Some degree of civic co-operation.

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The committee had been unable to get a firm invitation from any northern Circle which they felt fulfilled all these requirements satisfactorily-Sheffield came the nearest to doing so-and consequently decided, rather reluctantly, that the time was not yet ripe for a move north, and they were not prepared to jeopardize the National by advocating such a move for 1964. The regional show which is to be held in the north, however, will undoubtedly create a reservoir of experience which will possibly change the picture in the two or three years ahead, and the committee emphasised that they are not permanently against a move north, but only against it at this time. Meanwhile, might one suggest that the A.G.M. this year at Brighton might afford the opportunity to elect some northern representation to the National Committee. Three members of the committee are due to retire; they are standing for re-election but other nominations will be welcomed.



### BRIGHTON

Prospects for the annual Conference and Show at Brighton on April 19 and 20 look most promising, and there is no need for me to do more than to draw your attention to the article on page 93. Do try to come, however far away you live! It is always an unforgettable week-end, and if people find it worth travelling from Norway and Germany to attend, as some did last year, it is an event which our own winemakers can hardly afford to miss.

Representatives of northern Circles will be meeting at the Y.M.C.A., Committee Room No. 3, Peter Street, Manchester, on Friday, 15 March, at 8 p.m., to discuss running a northern show. Contact man: Mr. Alan Taylor, Manchester secretary, 14 Lydney Road, Flixton, Manchester.

### AGEING COMPOUND

Some readers apparently did not follow the instructions in my paragraph last week on the use of the Senex ageing compound and consequently have had some difficulty in using it. The recommended "dose" is 50 to 100 grms. per 100 litres (the latter = 1/6th oz. to one gallon), and one makes a paste with the compound and some of the wine to be treated, stirs it into the wine and leaves it for up to 48 hours, stirring frequently. *The carbon must then be removed by filtration or fining.* Some authorities recommend much longer periods than 48 hours, but they seem to be too long, for oxidation occurs, changing a red wine to a tawny colour. (One could argue, I suppose, that port goes tawny with age and that this is therefore to be expected with an ageing process, but generally winemakers will wish to retain the reds of their wines). The effect on the taste, however, is certainly astonishing, and gives one's wine a truly "commercial" finish.



### BTTTT!

By the time this magazine appears I hope that we shall have seen the back of the cold spell that still has us in its grip as I write. There have been some curious experiences, and I have had letters from many home brewers who have had their stocks of beer ("Keep in a cool place"! ) frozen. One friend of mine (who shall be nameless, for obvious reasons) grieves in his letter: "Cold has got at my beer. Thirty or so flagons of the best gone west." Winemakers, of course, come off rather better, since wine has sufficient alcohol content



## Conversation piece

••• before the meeting ••• Mr. Tony Pugh, Mr. C. J. Berry, Miss Kerr and Mr. Ken Hill.

## STAGE IS SET FOR BRIGHTON

By the time these words are in print all Circles should have received the schedules and programmes of the Amateur Winemakers' National Conference and Show, which this year is being held in the Corn Exchange and Royal Pavilion at Brighton on Friday, and Saturday, April 19th and 20th. So if your club has not yet had any schedules, by some oversight, or if you are a "lone" winemaker, write off now to Mr. Bill Martin, at 78 Broomhill Road, Farnborough, Hants.

The accommodation this year is undoubtedly the finest that the Conference has had in the five years of its existence, and this year's conference promises fair to exceed all its predecessors both in numbers of entries and in attendance, for Brighton is within striking distance of the most thickly populated part of the country from the point of view of winemaking clubs, and many Circles have already announced their intention of bringing large parties. Hotels are already booking up fast. Certainly Brighton is an attractive venue, and there is plenty there for the non-winemaking part of the family to do.

The civic authorities have been most kind, both with their very reasonable terms for the hire of such splendid accommodation, and in extending special privileges to those attending the Conference. The Mayor, Alderman W. H. G. Button, is giving us a civic reception, and also a dance and buffet on the Friday night.

The Saturday programme has something for everyone. It starts with "Winemaking in Pictures," when exhibits in the photographic colour slide and film classes will be projected and commented upon by Mr. F. J. Tritton. Later in the morning there will be a general discussion - those in the audience will be invited to take part - initiated by Mr. Cedric Austin, of Hertford, and Mr. John Parker, of Andover, with an old friend, Cdr. M. N. Mudie, R.N., also of Andover, in the chair.

The Conference lunch will undoubtedly be a sell-out again this year, particularly since speeches have been virtually eliminated.

After lunch Mr. J. A. Barnett, of King's College, Cambridge, a leading authority on the subject, will talk on "Yeasts and What They Do."

The annual general meeting of the Conference will occupy a further hour, and the Conference will wind up with the presentation of the awards by Mr. C. J. J. Berry, the Chairman, and a summary of the judges' comments given by the convenor, Mr. S. W. Andrews.

Throughout the day visitors will be able to try their own hand at judging in the novel "Judge with the

Judges" contest organised by Mrs. Cherry Leeds. In this they will be invited to place a number of wines (previously judged by experts) in order of merit. Dr. R. A. Webb will also be running a large "tombola."

### The Wine Show

The wine show itself has been still further enlarged this year and now runs to 42 classes.

The main classes (1-30) are much the same as before, with only minor alterations, but there are now two cookery classes for a savoury and a sweet cooked with wine, four classes for exhibitors who have not previously won a prize at a National, and two classes for judges, judges stewards and other show officials not eligible to enter the open classes. Mr. C. Austin, who has kindly given a cup for these last classes, put it rather neatly when he wrote: "I note that two classes for judges and stewards are included. This, I think, is an excellent idea. One comes to look on a judge as a kind of wine-drone, who flits around sipping other people's drinks, and these classes will underline the fact that they are still very much winemakers. But why no trophy for these cuspidor fillers? May I have the pleasure of putting up the Cedric Austin Cup as an award to the winner of most points in classes 41 and 42?"

Other new trophies this year have been kindly given by Messrs. Atcherley's, for the novices classes, by Major Gordon Instone, for the best Circle display, new exhibit or invention, and by Mr. R. C. Lucas for the member of the Bournemouth Circle gaining most points. The show now thus has 10 trophies.

With over 1,500 entries expected, it is thought no longer really feasible to select the best wine in the show, so the Shaw Porter trophy will henceforth go to the best fruit wine.

This year we should top 1,500 entries, all being well. Make sure that yours are amongst them, and start by obtaining a schedule right away.

See you at Brighton!