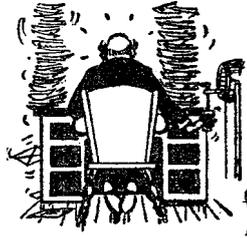


The Amateur Winemaker

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From the Editor's Chair



CONFERENCE AFTERTHOUGHTS

Cheltenham now that the dust has settled on that lively, energetic and most enjoyable week-end one can look back and, beginning to get things in perspective a little, see that it was indeed a most successful Conference. The setting was ideal and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves; the whole week-end had a most friendly atmosphere. The wine show outstripped all expectations as to quantity but was perhaps a little disappointing in quality, but one can't have everything, I suppose! The general arrangements for the whole week-end all worked smoothly (after an initial panic when the tabling did not arrive) and most people seemed satisfied. That is not to say that there were no criticisms or suggestions for improvements - there were. As Chairman I have since the Conference received a shoal of letters containing dozens of suggestions, many of them most useful. I cannot possibly answer all of these in detail, but will the writers please let me acknowledge their letters now in these notes, and rest assured ... all your ideas will be most carefully studied. The Conference is reported fully on other pages, so I need say no more here.



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CHELTENHAM BROKE

CHELTENHAM this will be a name to conjure with for many months for those who were lucky enough to be able to attend the fourth annual National Conference and Show. It was easily our biggest and best to date, whether as regards accommodation, wine show, or attendance, or programme.

The Town Hall at Cheltenham proved the ideal setting for a Conference of our size, with ample room both for the show and trade stands, and with smaller rooms for subsidiary purposes. Cheltenham Spa itself went out of its way to make us welcome: the Mayor, Ald. Miss S. L. Carter, generously gave a civic reception on the Friday evening and made a charming speech of welcome to between 300 and 400 guests, and the Amateur Winemaking Association of Cheltenham, under their President, Ald. Charles Irving (the Mayor's Consort), Chairman, Mr. Ivor Jakeway, and secretary, Mr. D. Trapp, had done much to smooth the Conference's path.

The wine show on Saturday was staged in the main ball, which was filled, and was surrounded by the trade stands of Messrs. Loftus, Grey Owl Laboratories, Joseph Bryant Ltd., Semplex Home Brews Ltd., Messrs. Morris, the Cheltenham coopers, Leigh-Williams & Sons, Winemakers' Equipment, Utilities, of Southampton, and M. Agusti Hidalgo (London) Ltd., and the British Milk Marketing Board, all or whom, thanks perhaps to the greater space at their disposal this year, staged far more impressive displays than they have been able to do at other Conferences.

There were also six excellent displays by winemaking Circles. Farnborough, who are incredibly good at this, staged a most attractive "country window" exhibit, the Amateur Winemaking Society of Wales relied upon moving displays to attract the eye to their outstanding entry, Cheltenham had a general display of casks and equipment, Hesa had an original "card party" entry, Bishop's Cleeve a "dinner table" one, and Harrow a range of wines neatly graduated by colour.

Mr. B. Traynor, of 58 Gledwood Gardens, Hayes, Middlesex, exhibited what must be the neatest fermentation lock yet, little more than a slight protuberance on the cork, his own design.

All in all, it was a wonderful show, with plenty to examine and discuss, and it was visited by well over 800

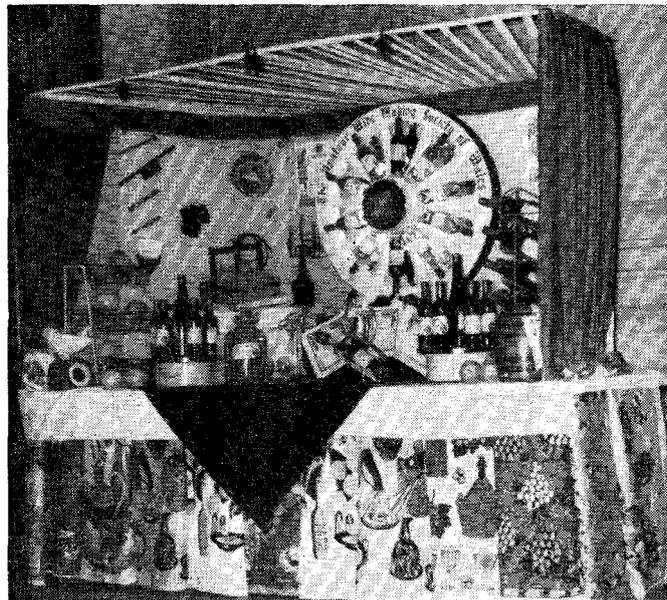
people on the Saturday, and probably nearer 1,000. It was also invaded by a whole squad of reporters from the local Press, BBC, *Manchester Guardian*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Express*, *Sunday Express* who kept several of the committee busy answering their questions, and Mr. E. Malin, Bishop's Cleeve committee man, did a most successful television interview.

The Show was undoubtedly a great credit, and testimony to the great deal of work put in by the committee, which consisted of: Chairman, Mr. C. J. J. Berry (Editor, *Amateur Winemaker*); general secretary, Mr. R. C. Lucas (Bournemouth); hon. treasurer and entries secretary, Mr. I. Morgan (New Forest); Mr. S. W. Andrews, (Hertford); Mr. L. W. Gilbertson (Cardiff), show supervisor; Mr. R. W. James (Bishop's Cleeve); Mr. I. H. Jakeway (Cheltenham); Mr. E. A. Malin (accommodation); Mr. C. W. Martin (Farnborough), schedule distribution and draw; Mr. B. C. A. Turner (Harrow), programme; and Dr. R. A. Webb, Bristol.

BOUQUETS TO: Mr. R. C. Lucas, of Bournemouth, an incomparable organiser (the general secretary), Mr. Lauric Gilbertson, of Cardiff (and the Andy Capp club) who worked like a black as Show Supervisor and general smoother-out of difficulties, Mr. Ivor Morgan, who did two jobs, both man-sized (treasurer and entries secretary) Mrs. Morgau, his wife, who was invaluable "in the office," Mr. and Mrs. W. Martin, of Farnborough, who ran the draw and greatly helped the funds, Mr. I. Jakeway, of Cheltenham, who had the difficult job of liaison, Mr. Malin, of Bishop's Cleeve, who handled everyone's accommodation problems smoothly, and ALL the committee, who pulled their weight uncomplainingly.

B.

The Winemaking Society of Wales won second place in the class for displays by Circles with this gay entry



ALL RECORDS

Farnborough's neat and extremely well-constructed stand was adjudged the best display by a
Circle



Photos: Ray Martin

He put them in their place!

One innovation this year which proved popular was a "Judge with the Judges" competition, run by Mrs. Cherry Leeds. Two expert judges, Comd. F. M. N. Mudie and Mr. S. W. Andrews, had judged six wines, and placed them in what they considered to be their true order of merit—a very difficult task, incidentally, since they were all good wines.

The wines were:

	Year	Gravity
A. Nectarine	1960	10
B. Elderflower	1958	00
C. Apricot Mead	1961	10
D. Strawberry	1958	00
E. Redcurrant	1960	00
F. Grape and Loganberry		8

The judges placed them in this order:

1. E
2. A
3. D
4. C
5. B
6. F

Mrs. Leeds commented afterwards: "There were 90 entries before the forms ran out (far more than this were duplicated) and I rather fancy that some people recognised a good idea to take back to their clubs and went off with the forms! There was much weighty thought given to the judging and of those who scored at all, most considered that No. 6 was well placed! Many had good ideas about the Nectarine (A) and Redcurrant (E) and put them down in that order, but 1st and 2nd were E and A."

In the event, only *one* person arrived at 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the correct order: Mr. H. R. Chandler of Hertford (a new judge for the National panel next year?).

Running him close were:

- Mrs. Stevens, of Torquay (2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th);
- Mr. D. E. Mathews, of Bristol (2nd, 4th, 6th) and
- Mrs. M. Bouley, of Farnborough (1st, 4th, 6th).

Thirty-seven entries had one out of the six right and ten had two right somewhere on the list.

Mrs. Leeds said afterwards: "I felt that many of those who had a shot at this had the right idea, and if they are interested and would like to compare their results and will send me a stamped addressed envelope (2½d. each way will do) I will be happy to send their form on to them. I hope the clubs in general will try out the idea; personally I would like to see it included in all syllabuses at least three times a year.

A Lunch of Lunches

The Conference Luncheon on the Saturday was the largest such gathering of winemakers ever held in this country (we are in danger of running out of superlatives!) for over 200 sat down to an excellent meal in the Pillar Room, all tickets having been sold long before the day.

Needless to say, it was enlivened by good-humoured banter, much popping of corks, and much exchanging of widely-varied table wines—even a *white* elderberry wine was produced.

Everyone enjoyed the meal and (an even rarer occurrence) the speeches which followed, for Alderman Charles Irving, the President of the local association of winemakers, who proposed "Amateur Winemakers" proved a truly brilliant speaker and did it in the neatest possible fashion, with grace, and above all, with a delightful dry humour.

We guarantee that his Winston Churchill-Bessie Braddock anecdote will go the rounds of the wine circles of the country.

The chairman of the National Conference and Show Committee, Mr. C. J. Berry, replied, seriously at first, stressing the astonishing growth of the Show in the short space of four years and thanking all those who had made it possible. But he too could not stay serious *too* long in that atmosphere, and was diverted into the modern version of the Three Bears, which was also well received!

Mr. E. A. Malin thanked all the judges and stewards in an apt little speech, stressing that they came to Cheltenham as a labour of love for no recompense whatsoever, and played an indispensable part in the Show's success, and Mrs. D. A. Robb, (President, Southampton) responded. She was the ideal person to do so, having attended originally as a steward and been "roped in" at the last moment as a judge owing to the unprecedented number of entries.

Finally, Ald. Irving kindly presented all the principal trophies and awards.

OVER 1,200 BOTTLES, BUT QUALITY A LITTLE DOWN

It had been expected that entries in the wine show would increase again this year (1959, 160; 1960, 600; 1961, 800) but they passed all expectations with an all-time record of 1,222 bottles. (One national paper was not satisfied even with this, and in its report made it 11,096!)

Entries were strong in all 26 classes, the average being 40-50, the largest class being that for red, sweet wine (87) and the lowest that for sparkling wine (12), which the secretary judged in dire peril from hurtling corks and foaming bottles.

The numbers were impressive, and realised the committee's ambition of topping the 1,000 mark for the first time. But what of the quality?

Here the story is perhaps, not quite so happy. Whilst there were undoubtedly many fine wines amongst all those glorious bottles, the *general* standard was unquestionably lower than at the last two Conferences. Most of the judges were agreed upon this, and the chairman commented upon it at the lunch: presentation was generally superb, wines being brilliant, free of deposit, of good colour, and expertly bottled, but taste was often markedly disappointing. Why? Several judges advanced possible reasons: the poor red fruit harvest of 1961; the fact that exhibitors are perhaps relying far too much upon filtration of show wines; the possibility that there was a temptation to "push in everything" in the hope of gaining an aggregate trophy either personally or for one's club.

Whatever the reason, there was a surprising unanimity among the judges: about the standard perhaps next year we shall see a reversal-all wines of good flavour, but less brilliance!

Talking of aggregates, the show was a triumph for the Liverpool club, who carried off the Amateur Winemaker Shield for the most points, a real achievement for a comparatively young club in the teeth of such fierce competition.

Much of their success was undoubtedly due to Mr. K. Hill, who won the Bournemouth Master Winemakers' Cup, so that two major trophies went to Liverpool. All winemakers, we know, will drink a toast to them, and to Mr. Hill, and recognise their success.

The Shaw Porter Trophy for the best wine in the Show (which was chosen from all the Firsts by a panel of judges) went back, by the decree of fortune, to its home town, Andover, for it was won by a member of the Andover Circle, Mr. C. J. Padwick, with a grape wine. This was the Conference's first trophy, and was given by Mr. B. Shaw Porter, who is a magistrate of the same County Bench as Mr. Padwick.

The handsome Turner Salver, given by committee member Mr. B. C. A. Turner, for the best three bottles of dinner wine, went to Mrs. F. Raven, of Alresford, and the Andrews Trophy, a silver cup donated by another committee-man, Mr. S. W. Andrews, for the best dry fruit wine, was won by Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Austin, of Hertford, who have figured prominently in the prize lists of several shows. So the trophies were well distributed.

Judging took from 2 p.m. to about 6 p.m. and judges' comments were exhibited on a notice board for all to read.

In all, a most impressive show.

NEWS FLASH! The final accounting has still to be done but we CAN say now that the 1962 Conference was the biggest financial success yet. It made a handsome profit-exact figure next month.

FULL LIST OF WINNERS

See separate report



L. to r.: Mr. L. Gilbertson, Mr. W. Martin, Mr. B. C. A. Turner, Dr. R. A. Webb, Mr. C. J. Berry, Mr. R. C. Lucas, Mr. I. Morgan (hidden), Mr. E. Malin, Mr. S. W. Andrews

A.G.M. WAS STORMY

The annual meeting proved to be quite a stormy one—a far different atmosphere from the convivial one at the lunch an hour before. The potter arose at the tail end of the meeting (as is usual!) over the venue of the next Conference, and it bid fair to turn into a battle of North v. South.

So let's deal with that first. Delegates from the north of England strongly represented that the next Conference should be held in their territory, their case being that if this was truly a national conference it should be prepared to meet in all parts of the country to give all winemakers an equal chance of attending. At the moment, one delegate claimed, there was far too much emphasis on the south. Why should the north be neglected?: there were certainly suitable centres there for such assemblies and they in the north would like to see the Conference there.

Mr. C. J. Berry, who was presiding, pointed out that at last year's Conference it had been suggested and agreed that the 1962 Conference be held at Cheltenham, and Brighton had been mentioned as a possible venue for 1963. Consequently the committee had arranged this Conference at Cheltenham and had looked into the possibility of Brighton in '63. Mr. B. C. A. Turner had inspected the accommodation there, it was entirely suitable, and they had provisionally booked it, because to obtain an adequate hall in a Conference town, with full civic facilities, one had to book at least a year, and preferably more, ahead. It was not that they were unwilling to go right north (they were) but they could not afford to risk cancelling an established booking on the offchance of obtaining other accommodation in the north.

This provoked a vigorous protest from a northern delegate (we are sorry we do not know his name, but we think he was from Northampton) who protested again that the north was being ignored, and thought poorly of it. He was shocked that the committee should already have committed the Conference to Brighton without waiting for the opinions of the annual meeting. Brighton, he said, would be inaccessible to winemakers from the north, and to many in the south, and a Conference there must be poorly supported.

The Chairman reiterated that bookings had to be made at least a year ahead and assured the speaker that the committee would be only too ready to move north, but the first he personally had heard of the proposal was at the civic reception the previous evening, and he pointed out that they still had no firm invitation to any town, despite the fact that clubs had been circularised and suggestions for future venues (not just 1963) invited. But he assured the speaker that if such an invitation was received for 1964 or 1965 it would be most welcome and carefully considered.

Finally Mr. E. Malin, of Bishop's Cleeve, poured oil on troubled waters by offering to collate the suggestions and opinions of the northern Circles to see if a solution could be found, an idea that was gratefully received.

The rest of the meeting was comparatively uneventful. The treasurer, Mr. Ivor Morgan, of the New Forest, presented and explained the accounts of the 1961 Conference, which had made a profit of some £50, leaving the £100 subscribed by Circles intact, and the chairman explained that it was not the intention to approach Circles for more contributions unless necessary. The accounts were adopted.

So was the proposed "Constitution and Rules" for the Conference and Show which the committee had drawn up, after it had been explained that, under this, any Circle subscribing a minimum of 10/- to the Conference funds became a member Circle of the Conference and was entitled to a vote at the annual meeting. The Constitution was adopted with one slight amendment, the annual meeting being of the opinion that one-third of the committee, and not *all* the committee, as suggested, should retire each year. In this way a better continuity would be preserved.

The general secretary, Mr. R. C. Lucas, in his report, traced the history and development of the Show.

The committee were re-elected *en bloc*, and henceforth under the Constitution will elect the officers from their number.

Unfortunately the annual general meeting, being towards the end of the day, came hard up against the clock, and there was insufficient time for adequate discussion of some important points (the Town Hall had to be cleared to a rigid schedule to allow for an evening function) and in future years efforts will have to be made to arrange matters rather more satisfactorily.

SLIDES, FILMS, INTERVIEW AND BRAIN'S TRUST

This year, as a change, the committee made an effort to get away from the idea of set talks by individuals, and to introduce more variety.

On the Friday evening, Major Gordon Instone, of Epsom, demonstrated modern filtering methods, and aroused a great deal of interest (there is probably scope for more "live" demonstrations like this).

Saturday morning kicked off quietly but interestingly with Mr. F. J. Tritton, a past President of the Royal Photographic Society, showing and commenting on the two sets of coloured slides and the cine film on wine-making that had been entered in Classes 27 and 28, which he had judged. These "played to a packed house."

The same was true of the session in which Mr. B. C. A. Turner interviewed in true "Face to Face" style, Mrs. S. M. Tritton, of Grey Owl Laboratories, and Mr. R. C. Lucas, the Show's general secretary, two formidably accomplished winemakers.

Ben Turner handled the session admirably, starting off in professionally aggressive style with such questions as "Would you say that you are easy to get on with?" "Are you not brusque?" "Is it true that you do not suffer fools gladly?" "Are you arrogant?" and following up with others about commerce or professionalism in winemaking. His two victims took it in good part, however, and on more than one occasion goodhumouredly turned the tables.

Later the trio went on to more informative topics their wine output, their methods, how they came to take up the hobby, their own background, and, inevitably, yeasts and flavours.

A most informative session, ended all too soon by the clock.

The Brains Trust in the afternoon was agreed to be one of the most rewarding sessions in the Conference and dealt with a whole range of questions, far too many to report here.

It was expertly chaired by Mr. S. W. Andrews, whose team comprised Mrs. L. K. Lucas, Bournemouth; Mr. C. R. Austin, Hertford; and Mr. C. R. Shave, Birmingham

THE AMATEUR WINEMAKER
JUNE 1962

CONFERENCE
MADE OVER £100

Good news about the National Conference and Show, held at Cheltenham in the first week of April.

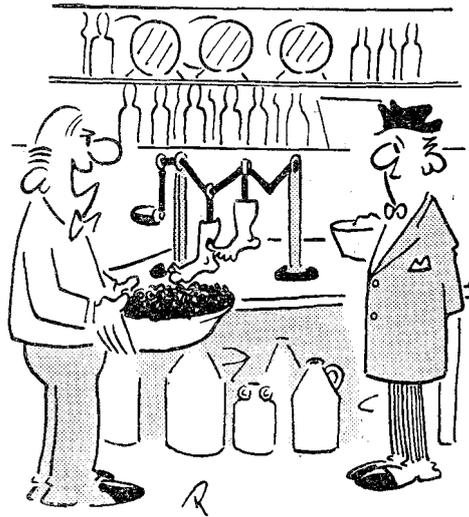
When the committee met at Southampton for their "inquest" the treasurer, Mr. I. Morgan, was able to report that "the National" had certainly been a success financially, for it had made £108, a most satisfactory result. This means that the show is now in a reasonably healthy state financially, although care will have still to be exercised for a few years, since the balance at the bank is as yet not quite as large as one would like to see for a show of this size, the expenses of which increase year by year. "The National" now has to its credit funds amounting to £254, composed of the £100 float originally subscribed by Circles, £46 profit from the 1961 Conference at Harrow, and £108 from this year.

Income at Cheltenham amounted to £430, the main items being admission charges, £118, trade stands £33, entry fees £115, raffle £36, and lunch tickets £125. Outgoings were £322, the main ones being the lunch, £111, advertising £34, printing and stationery £52, postages and telephone £15, prize money £67, raffle prizes £10, tabling £19, and sundries £12.

The committee meeting was a long one, since many suggestions received from Circles and individuals for the improvement of future Conferences were considered.

Committee jobs were re-allocated as follows: Chairman, Mr. C. J. J. Berry; Vice-Chairman, Mr. B. C. A. Turner; treasurer and trade stand secretary, Mr. Ivor Morgan; general secretary, Mr. R. C. Lucas; entries secretary, Mr. E. A. Hawkins (Brighton), show supervisor, Mr. L. Gilbertson; programme and lecture secretary, Mr. B. C. A. Turner; Press, publicity and public relations, Mr. E. Malin; advertising, Mr. C. J. Berry; schedule distribution, Mr. W. Martin; convener of judges, Mr. S. W. Andrews; awards secretary, Mr. Ivor Morgan; draw organiser, Dr. R. A. Webb; accommodation liaison, Mr. Woodcock (Brighton).

The committee decided to adopt the *Amateur Wine-maker* as the official organ of the National Conference and Show.



"It's my own invention .. "