

NOTTINGHAM RETAIN THE CHAMPIONSHIP

For the second year running Nottingham Circle, in the teeth of strong opposition from all over the country, emerged as the champion club and carried off *The Amateur Winemaker shield* at the National Conference and Show at Margate.

The Conference was easily the most successful for some years, with well over 1,000 people attending, and with nearly 3,000 entries in the wine show from some 480 exhibitors. Margate gave us a warm welcome, the weather was tolerable (if a little breezy!) and hotels generally were found to be both reasonably priced and comfortable.

The Winter Gardens, too, was a convenient venue, for the wine show and trade stands were accommodated in Queen's Hall, which immediately adjoined the Concert Hall used for the talks, meetings and evening reception.

Bottles came pouring in on the Friday afternoon and evening, and members of local winemaking circles did sterling work as stewards in helping Mr. & Mrs. L. Stagg, of the National executive, to set up the wine show. Judges were briefed by Mr. F. Bastin later that evening, so all was then set for the mammoth judging session on the Saturday morning.

Smooth

This went off remarkably smoothly, especially when one considers the size of the task and the amount of detailed organisation involved. And the quality of the entries this year was generally agreed to be high even for a National.

Nottingham retained the Circle championship, and the individual championship (as embodied in the Bournemouth Master Winemakers Cup) was shared by Mr. D. S. Clements, of M.E.L., Crawley, Sussex, who also won the Eric Malin

trophy, and the magnificent Hidalgo cup, and Mrs. Kershaw, of Crosby, who also took the Shaw Porter cup.

Another outstandingly successful competitor was Mrs. S. J. Dewdney, of Twickenham, who won both the Harold Beall Memorial cup and the Southern Vinyards Trophy.

The Master Brewer's Award (the Wilf Newsom Cup) was shared between Mr. M. Tomlinson and Mr. A. J. Hewett.

The awards were scattered pretty well all over the country!

Lively talk

On Saturday afternoon Mr. Cedric Austin chaired an "Ask the Experts" session, and this was followed by a talk by the guest of honour, Mr. Ernest Marples, the former M.P. and Minister of Transport, who gave a witty, charming and lighthearted discourse on the trials, tribulations (and pleasures) of owning and running a Burgundian vineyard.

Cabaret popular

In the evening the Town Mayor of Margate, Cllr. J. E. Jones, generously entertained over 1,000 happy wine-makers at a reception, no mean task, but this year the arrangements proved much more adequate and everyone enjoyed the dancing and, in particular, the first-class cabaret of two charming lightning artists and musical comedian. This was quite the best such reception the Conference has had for some years.

Association's year

The annual general meeting on Sunday morning went off very smoothly indeed, the Executive having obviously drawn a few lessons from their experience of the previous year.

After being opened by the President, Mr. S. W. Andrews, it was conducted by the Chairman, Mr. Ken Hill, who reported that they had had an increase in membership during the year and now had 628 individuals, 234 associates, and 166 Circles in membership.

The Committee were sorry to have lost during the year the services of Mr. B. C. A. Turner, former President, and that their treasurer, Mr. F. Forster, and schedule secretary, Mr. Elvin Plant, were retiring.

The treasurer reported that they had started the year with a surplus of £814 but this year, unfortunately, there had been an excess of expenditure over income of £220, but the Association still had capital of £1,614, "so we are still solvent."!

Elected or re-elected to the National committee were Mr. F. Bastin, Mr. K. Bilham, Mr. P. Delmon, Mr. D. Ives and Mr. H. Ritchie.

New set-up

The "nitty-gritty" of the meeting was the submission by the National Executive (through Mr. R. Butcher) of a new Constitution and set of Rules, the main effect of which would be to change the name of the National Association of Amateur Winemakers to "The National Association of Wine



A general view of judging in progress.

Below: (l.) David Moon, the judge, of Rickmansworth (r.), and Stan Baker (Chatham) his steward, deep in thought over the pale ale class. Right: Mrs. V. Taylor and Mrs. Fitzsimmonds judge the cookery classes.





Former President Mr. Cyril Lucas and his wife hand in their entries.



Anxious moments for competitors when the results are displayed.



Above: Intense concentration during judging.



The Amateur Winemaker shield was won by Nottingham and received by Mr. Richard Brooksbank.

Right: Guest speaker Mr. Ernest Marples, with Mr. & Mrs. S. W. Andrews (President), and the Mayor and Mayoress of Margate, Mr. & Mrs. J. Jones.



and Beermakers (Amateur)", and to open membership to (a) individual; (b) Circles and (c) Federations, and make provision for all of these and the Guild of Judges, to be represented on the executive.

When comments were invited from the floor they were all hostile or critical. Mr. A. B. Smith, of Leeds, spoke strongly in favour of an orthodox three-tier organisation (National, Regional, and Circle), Mr. Adcock, of the Guild of Judges, said that the proposals included too many ambiguities and the Guild would like these sorted out before it was passed, Mr. Chaplin of Eastbourne, said that there were too many errors, grammatical and otherwise, and Mr. Bryan Acton, of Harrow, asked how, if the meeting accepted the proposals in toto, as the committee wanted, they could afterwards be modified, as the Executive suggested.

Despite the criticisms, the new constitution and rules were accepted, by a card vote of 133 to 108.

"Andy" Andrews was re-elected President, and both he and the Chairman were given silver goblets in appreciation of their services.

THEY DID THE WORK!

Organisers of this highly successful 1974 Conference were: Chairman, K. Hill; Vice-chairman and treasurer, F. Forster; general secretary, P. Delmon; assistant secretary, D. B. Ives; membership secretary Miss S. M. Varley; entries secretary, A. Briggs; show manager, L. Stagg; supplies officer, A. H. Ritchie; programme secretary, Mrs. K. Hill, schedule secretary, E. Plant; chief steward, Mrs. F. Stagg; Convener of Judges, F. Bastin; PRO and assistant treasurer, P. Awbery; awards secretary, R. Butcher; Handbook editor, B. Edwards; local liaison, Mrs. M. Leggett.

MARGATE . . .

TROPHIES WENT TO . . .

MARCONI CLUB TROPHY: BEXLEYHEATH

ERIC MALIN MEMORIAL TROPHY: Mr. D. S. CLEMENTS, MEL/AW.

BASTIN CUP: Mr. W. J. LORD, Thames Estuary.

VINA TROPHY: Mr. K. GUNN, S. London W.C.

TURNER TROPHY: Mr. G. HOLT, Epsom Downs.

ATCHERLEY TROPHY: Mr. W. STANSWOOD, Unattached.

SOUTHERN VINYARDS TROPHY: Mrs. S. J. DEWDNEY, Twickenham.

LOFTUS CUP: Mr. A. R. MOORE, Unattached.

ANDREWS CUP: Mr. G. W. CHRISTMAS, Bognor.

HIDALGO TROPHY: Mr. D. S. CLEMENTS, MEL/AW.

SWEET'N DRY CUP: Mrs. P. D. WILSON, MEL.

SHAW PORTER CUP: Mrs. R. W. KERSHAW, Crosby.

GORDON INSTONE CUP: Mr. J. B. MASON, Ace of Clubs.

HAROLD BEALL MEMORIAL CUP: Mrs. S. J. DEWDNEY, Twickenham.

CEDRIC AUSTIN CUP: Dr. & Mrs. J. M. LEADLEY, Nottingham/Mrs. A. NEWTON, Hull & District.

BOURNEMOUTH MASTER WINEMAKERS CUP: Mr. D. S. Clements, MEL/AW/

Mrs. R. W. KERSHAW, Crosby.

HILL CUP: Dr. & Mrs. J. M. LEADLEY, Nottingham/Mrs. A. NEWTON, Hull & District

ROYCROFT CUP: Mr. W. B. AGGAS, Bournemouth.

BILHAM TASTEVIN: Mrs. A. NEWTON, Hull & District.

WILF NEWSOM CUP — MASTER BREWER: Mr. M. TOMLINSON/Mr. A. J. HEWETT, Heathfield, Sth. Devon ABS.

TEMPLE TANKARD: ALCOL HOME BREW CENTRE, Unattached.

TILLY TIMBRELL TROPHY: Miss J. LEGGETT, Thanet.

'AMATEUR WINEMAKER' SHIELD: NOTTINGHAM.

RANKIN TROPHY: Mrs. C. A. FURNESS/Mr. R. H. BARNS, Wingham Country Wine Club.

'ITONA' TANKARD: Mr. B. W. BLAKENEY, Coulsdon & Purley.

'HOME BEER AND WINEMAKING' TROPHY: Manchester Wine Circle.

LEARN BY TASTING

"Drinking wine is one of life's great pleasures. Through the centuries certain ideas about wine-drinking have been formulated, as guides to help you to get the most from a bottle. Personal preferences are more important than any rules. The rules themselves are little more than tested preferences. Certain wines taste better than others with specific dishes.

If rules inhibit your enjoyment of wines, there should be no rules. As you learn about wines by tasting them with your own palate, you will invent your own guides. No rules about wine fall into the realm of etiquette; they merely indicate the most pleasing combinations of food and drink and help you to avoid unpleasant ones.

What tastes right to your palate is not sure to please another's.

Wines of France—Alexis Lichine.

OVERHEARD

Mrs. Sybil Hill, the Conference's hardworking programme secretary, would have been amused to hear the following passage between two wine-makers at the entrance of the Winter Gardens:—

"Where's Sybil Hill?"

"I don't know the district; I'm a stranger here myself."

CAUTIOUS

One feature of the "Conference Hotel," the Glenwood, where the National Executive was accommodated for the conference, was a large and rather fierce parrot on a perch in the vestibule. At lunch on Sunday, when chicken was on the menu, the following conversation was overheard.

NEXT YEAR'S CONFERENCE!

Book the date now!
25-27 April, at Butlins
Holiday Camp, Bognor.

Waiter: Will you have chicken, sir?

Winemaker: Is the parrot still in the hall?

Waiter (puzzled): Yes, Sir, of course.

Winemaker: Then I'll have chicken.



Conversation piece: (l. to r.) President 'Andy' Andrews, Mayor of Margate, Chairman Ken Hill, Treasurer Fred Forster and Programme Secretary Sybil Hill.

Below: They kept us busy on the 'Winemaker' stand!





Brains trust in session (l. to r.) Amateur Winemaker authors Don Hebb, Bryan Acton and Cedric Austin, with Mrs. P. Leadley and Harold Ritchie.

Below: The magnificent collection of trophies.

