



## Chairman's Annual Report 2020-2021

Welcome to our AGM for 2020-21. Before we start, I need to explain that this could look like an Oscars Speech as there are a huge amount of people that I need to thank! I considered recording a video but as those of you who know me understand I am not a big fan of seeing myself on tape and we couldn't organise subtitles at short notice! We have had a very strange year indeed and instead of speaking about all our fantastic events and the magnificent course I will instead have to bore you with the administrative tasks we have all worked on this year. We are enormously proud however of our fundraising efforts for our charity partner The Drinks Trust.



I'm sure that when Taittinger, this year's Presidential House (and Kevin McKee in particular) took on their role they didn't expect to be so busy in a year of a lockdown and have to speak to me so much. They, along with all the shippers have been a huge support in this hugely different year, Thank you!

This year we began with our last AGM when we had a fantastic Vintage tasting in Vintners Hall when the effects of COVID and how it would affect our Trade was still relatively unknown. At this event little did we know how relevant our choice of Charity Partner would be! Through our fundraising activities we managed to raise £11,052.00 which is the most we have ever raised. This was only possible through the hard work of the Committee, the support of our Houses and Shippers and of course our Academicians who supported every single raffle we did, Thank you all! Even better news for the Drinks Trust is that when the Houses in France heard how much we had raised they increased our efforts to £16,000 (representing an equal amount from the 16 Houses). Thank you once again!



This year the Committee have gone above and beyond with everything asked of them and their support to both the Academy and I has been incredible. We have done a huge amount in a truly short time and hopefully this will lay the basis for a stronger and more relevant Academy going forward. We have redesigned our website, social media and initiated a digital platform to keep our Academicians up to date with what is happening in Champagne. Our Newsletter was another new initiative which we have found an invaluable way to engage our members and shippers alike. These initiatives will grow and strengthen as we go forward and are now our key methods of communication for the Academy.



CHAMPAGNE

## TAITTINGER

*Reims*

Our Course unfortunately did not happen in 2020 but with the support of the Houses we have decided to roll over everything into 2021 so Taittinger will still be the Presidential House and I will continue as Chairman (sorry!). Our candidates will be supported and if due to COVID they must change role or get made redundant they will still be allowed to attend the course in 2021. Every candidate has been in constant contact with us throughout this year and they will all be a great addition to our membership.

This year we aim to continue our event calendar (found on our website) albeit with different timings to normal. We aim to go ahead with the Course in June 2021 if restrictions permit and this will be the starting point of our year. Our Vintage tasting will become a Halo event in our calendar in an incredibly special location and with hopefully some further activity around it. Our dinners will then start to take place starting in September and run through until the end of the year.

We have a lot still to do in 2021 to continue to develop our communication, educational resources and engagement plans and we will continue to update you via our website and newsletter. We will continue our support of The Drinks Trust as our chosen charity and our partnership with Riedel who have also supported us this year through some educational work and promotional support. We aim to engage these partners along with some further guests to begin a Masterclass programme for our members at certain events to regain our position within Champagne Education in the UK & Ireland. Further information will be forwarded when dates and speakers are confirmed.



I would like to give a huge thanks to everyone on the Committee as they really have supported me through this year and worked towards our shared vision of reaffirming our position within the Champagne world. Every single member has given their time and expertise to help make the Academy relevant in this vastly different landscape and I look forward to working with them this year. I would also like to single out Val who has taken on this year's challenge with gusto and we appreciate her support as we know it has been very different than what has come before. I would also like to thank Martin Dibben who has decided to pass the Treasurer baton to Philp Amps. Martin is thankfully staying on in the Committee as support for Philip and to also help with some further changes we will be making in the coming year. Paul Walker has been a huge help this year and has probably had more to do than any other Vice Chair in our past. We decided that we would work towards a shared vision and he has been a massive support to everyone on the Committee and has led the development of our digital redesign. All members deserve a personal thank you which I will do in person and hopefully when our events begin again you will all be aware of what they have dedicated to the future of our Academy.

#champagneacademy





We would love for all our members to have a say in the future of the Academy, to support our work going forward and to contribute where possible to the website and newsletter.



I look forward to seeing you all in the near future and I hope you and your families stay safe!

*Many Thanks*

*Andrew*

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