



Welcome to the second edition of the bi-annual Hotel School newsletter. Through this newsletter and our updated website (www.gmit.ie/thehotelschool), we hope to keep you updated on the many activities taking place in GMIT and the Hotel School.

Another academic year has finished and we are busy getting ready for September 2010. Despite budgetary challenges and government moratoriums the school continues to grow, and 1,080 students registered to study with the school in 2009-2010.

The last six months have passed very quickly and we have had many 'ups and downs'. Student achievement through volunteering programmes and professional competitions have kept spirits high and busy. However the sudden and unexpected loss of our colleague Jurgen Gottsche really brought home to us how precious life is.

Jurgen's wife Margaret and their sons spent time with us during this sad period and we were privileged to share our stories and anecdotes with them. Dennis Murphy's words (see page 2), really bring home what Jurgen did for our school, students and you, our graduates and friends. His memory and work will never be forgotten.

My thanks to all colleagues who helped prepare this edition, I hope we have an opportunity to welcome you back to Galway before the end of this year. And finally, if you do know of any alumni who have not registered their details with the Links Office, please send this newsletter to them and encourage them to join. We hope to have more alumni events happening over the year.

Best wishes
Cait Noone
Head of Hotel School

Hotel School hosts "Taster Days" for secondary schools

A schools liaison project was initiated by the Hotel School in late 2006, in order to promote courses within the school to second level students.

As a direct result of this project, invites are issued to all secondary schools in the region to sign up for "Taster Days". Taster Days offer a unique opportunity for students to experience production kitchens in operation, view the school facilities, and receive information on all courses during a structured half day visit to the school.

Available dates are very quickly booked up, and the feedback has been so positive that there is a waiting list of secondary schools who want to avail of this opportunity.

The success of Taster Days is largely due to the support and commitment of Hotel School lecturers who welcome the students into their class, and communicate their enthusiasm for the industry in a very accessible way. For more information, please contact the Links Office.

Dates for the Diary:

Tuesday, 12th October, 2010:
GMIT Careers Fair

Wednesday 3rd & Thursday 4th November, 2010:
GMIT Graduation, Radisson Blu Hotel, Galway

Wednesday, 17th November, 2010:
GMIT Open Day, Galway and Cluain Mhuire

Saturday, 27th November, 2010:
"Perspectives on a moving target", Education Conference, GMIT. The conference will acknowledge the significant contribution to education of Mr Bernard O'Hara, Registrar GMIT, on his retirement.

Saturday, 22nd January, 2011:
Open morning for mature student applicants

Wednesday, 6th April, 2011:
Hotel School Careers Fair, 10am – 12.15pm



Departures:

Best wishes to the following staff members who retired recently:

Sheila Corcoran,
Kitchen Attendant,
Unit 2

Ide Jennings
Lecturer in Culinary Arts

In Memory of Jurgen Gottsche

Jurgen left us suddenly and without warning on Monday, 8th of March. He had joined the Department of Hotel & Catering Management in September 1993 as a Lecturer in Food & Beverage Management. We were delighted that he decided to join our team as he had a substantive record of managerial achievement in major hotels and as an F & B consultant in Germany.

Jurgen had graduated from Galway RTC with a BA in Hotel & Catering Management in 1982 and he retained a deep commitment to the ideals and importance of a vocationally focused education system. Germanic by birth and nature, he was a towering figure who left an indelible mark on students. He strongly believed that if a student wanted to succeed, they could do so through attendance and application at college, and commitment and focus on the job during placement periods.

He had helped the Department with German placements on an unpaid basis from 1988 and continued that work until 2004. I well remember how well he dealt with the awful death of Des Kelleher, a 3rd year BA student who he had placed in Dresden. Des was killed in a train accident on his last evening and Jurgen was out there to support the family and make appropriate arrangements within 36 hours. Commitment to students was his nature.

Most lecturers hate writing examination papers and Jurgen was no exception. He had to be pursued endlessly to produce them, but when they finally emerged, they were demanding and



Jurgen Gottsche, RIP
(Photo courtesy of Paul Scannell)

fair. When it came to marking he was scrupulous and there was no hesitation in speaking his mind at Exam Board meetings. It was many the time he stood alone while making his case and he was at his best when reminding others of precedents and standards. He was student focused through his words and actions.

Jurgen had four sons and he was so proud of them. He lived to see Klaus, Killian, Mark and Yan graduate. Our sincere sympathy goes to them, and Margaret, on their terrible loss. He was a Dad and teacher, par excellence, who served GMIT very well.

*Dennis Murphy
Head of Learning and Teaching*

Guest speakers make a valuable contribution to Hotel School programmes

Guest speakers from a number of different industries came to GMIT to give presentations to our students throughout the year, offering them valuable insight into a variety of issues and opportunities.

This type of "real-life" input into courses is very important, and the Hotel School welcomes offers from industry professionals to come in and talk to our students at any time.

Topics from guest lecturers this year included:

- Blogging & social networking as tools for making your event a success
(*Claire Heskin, Association of Irish Festival Events*)
- Card payments and fraudulent transactions
(*Una Dillon, Irish Payment Services Organisation IPSO*)
- Ecolabelling for tourism businesses
(*Aine Conaghan, Institute of Technology Sligo and Leave No Trace Ireland*)
- Event security operation and the powers of an Garda Síochána
(*Sgt. Brendan Moore*)
- Networking in the tourism industry
(*Dan Murphy, Galway SKAL President & General Manager, Galway Bay Hotel*)

GMIT student wins Knorr Student Chef of the Year Competition

Trainee chefs from all over the country gathered in the kitchens of GMIT Galway for a live Masterchef-style final to claim the title of Knorr Student Chef of the Year, on February 11th this year.

In a dramatic two-hour 'chef-off' it was Billy Garvey, student on the Total Immersion Programme (TIP), who went home with the overall honors and an all-expenses paid trip to the home of Knorr and Unilever's global R&D Centre of Food Excellence in Germany.

It was a significant accomplishment for a mature student who only

joined GMIT last September, and great credit is due to his mentor Frank X O'Connor and all the lecturing team.

One of the Judges, Stefan Matz, Head Chef at 5* Ashford Castle and the 'g' hotel in Galway said the trainees were a credit to their colleges - "The caliber of work these budding chefs showed today was exceptional and made judging extremely difficult but I'm confident that in Billy we've found the next Irish chef star."



Billy Garvey, TIP Student, GMIT
Knorr Student Chef of the Year 2010

Hotel School students visit Lycée Hôtelier La Rochelle, France

GMIT Hotel School has a long standing partnership with the Lycée Hôtelier de la Rochelle, and these links were further strengthened this year with a professional and cultural trip to La Rochelle in March.

Students from Bar, Hospitality Year 2 and Professional Cookery Year 2, were accompanied by lecturers Anne Brindley (Languages) and Colin Gilligan (Hotel School).

On the menu: gourmet dinners in the host Lycée Hôtelier training restaurant and on 'foodie' street St Jean du Perot, guided tour of Hennessy's distillery in Cognac, wine tasting in St Emilion, visit of the town of La Rochelle and the Aquarium, food tasting at the colourful and lively Saturday market, and a day-trip to the island Ile-de-Ré with a walk from the fishing village of La Flotte to St Martin en Ré.



Hotel
School
students
in La
Rochelle

Hotel School Careers Fair – March 3rd, 2010

Students and job seekers had the opportunity to network with over 25 prospective industry employers at the annual Hotel School Careers Fair on March 3rd.

The event received national press coverage in the Irish Independent – an article by Brian MacDonald said that the event was an indicator that there are still career opportunities in the hospitality industry despite the downturn.

This year the Careers Fair was coordinated by fourth year Event Management students from BA in Hotel & Catering Management.



Employers and students meet

Maria Murphy (GMIT), and Michael
Mullally (Connemara Coast Hotel)

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*"Teachers open the door,
you enter by yourself."*

Chinese saying

Profile: Peter Lehobye, TMDP, 2004



Peter Lehobye, TMDP, 2004

Operations Manager of Inchydoney
Island Lodge & Spa, Co. Cork

Peter's career began in 1997 when he worked as a day porter at the Palace Hotel at Sun City in South Africa. In 1998, Peter was part of the opening team of the Caesar Gauteng Hotel & Casino in Johannesburg, where he began as a Switchboard Operator and a year later was promoted to the position of Night Auditor.

In June 2001, Peter came to Ireland and joined the team at Inchydoney Island Lodge & Spa as a Receptionist. He quickly climbed the career ladder and was offered a position as Trainee Manager.

During his second year of training he was appointed the Acting Sales & Conference Manager with responsibilities for handling wedding bookings, groups and conferences. In 2003, he was promoted to Front of House Manager when he took charge Reception, Reservations and the Sales & Conference departments. In 2007, Peter was offered the position of Operations Manager and is currently enjoying this role.

Peter finds that the skills of the TMDP a valuable contribution to day to day run of the hotel business.

"The three to four year period of combined business studies in college with working and training in all departments in the hotel has perfectly positioned me to contribute to winning many awards with Inchydoney Island Lodge & Spa, such as Best Overall Hotel, Hospitality Ireland, Best Four Star Hotel, Hotel & Catering Review 2007, one of the top 15 destination spas in the world, Ireland's Leading Spa Resort, World Travel Award 2004, 2005 & 2007, National Hospitality Award, Best Resort Hotel overall winner 2009" adds Peter as he reflects on the journey so far and his role as part of the team in the success of the renowned Inchydoney Island Lodge & Spa.

Paris Press Award for Graduate Chef: Anthony Kelly

Anthony Kelly, BA Culinary Arts graduate and proprietor of Riverside Restaurant in Charlestown, Co. Mayo, recently competed in the World Skills Pastry and Confectionary Competition in Paris.

He competed against individuals from twelve countries, taking a credible sixth place overall. This was the first time Ireland has taken part in the competition.

Mary Reid, GMIT tutor and international judge.



Anthony Kelly, BA Culinary Arts