

AEHT - Newsletter

Dear AEHT Members

This year's 22nd AEHT Annual Conference will take you to the crossroads of the Slav and Mediterranean worlds, where East meets West. Croatia, an independent Republic since 1991, offers a rich architectural heritage, largely because of its strategic position. Croatia is a blend of cultures, civilisations and historical periods, and bears the marks of the country's history and of the peoples who have occupied the land and who have fought over it: Greeks, Romans, Ottomans, Venetians and even the French. The country's gastronomy and the pleasures it offers the tourist are a living testimony to this rich past.

Between 17th and 22nd November 2009 the city of Dubrovnik, an architectural gem on the Dalmatian coast, and once one of the most powerful naval powers in the Mediterranean, designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site 30 years ago - this city will be the setting for a special kind of power struggle: future chefs, bar-men and -women, tourism specialists, managers ... these and others will compete together in a spirit of fair play and great friendship.



A breathtaking view of Dubrovnik – the Pearl of the Adriatic

This mythical and exceptionally beautiful city, deservedly called the Pearl of Adriatic, suddenly appears as if in a dream as you drive round a sharp bend on the coast road built into the cliff which plunges straight into the limpid sea, around 20 kilometres from the airport. Dubrovnik – a city of fewer than 50,000 inhabitants – has kept its mediaeval appearance. It is perched on the 'Dubrava' rock ('dub' means 'oak', 'dubrava' is an oak forest); the visitor is first struck by the city's two kilometre-long ramparts giving straight onto the sea; the oldest parts of these ramparts date from the 12th century, are up to 25 metres thick and are guarded by 16 massive towers.

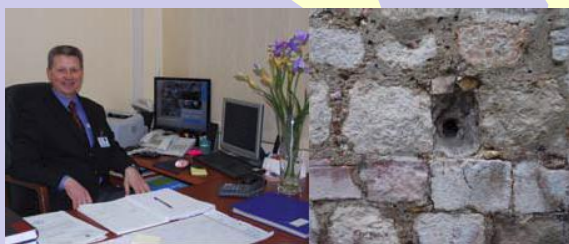


A map of the old city showing the damage caused (around 68% of the buildings were hit by artillery fire) by the aggression against Dubrovnik in the 1991-1992 conflict.



Majestic ramparts caressed by the waves.

In 1991 and 1992 neither these fortifications nor any political or diplomatic activity was what enabled the city to survive during the terrible siege and the attacks from the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) and from the Serb and Montenegrin militias: instead it was the courage of a handful of men from the local police force and special forces and volunteers - joined at the end of 1991 by the 9th HOS volunteer company. The soldiers of the HOS (Hrvatske Obrambene Snage – Croatian Defence Forces) not only ensured the defence of the city, but also reprovisioned the inhabitants by night. The old aqueduct was brought back into use to provide the citizens with drinking water and thus also played a part in the population's survival. The old town was simultaneously pounded by artillery positioned on the slopes of the surrounding hills as well as by the naval guns of the Yugoslav warships which sealed off the city by patrolling in the waters off Dubrovnik. During the 120 day siege (October to December 1991) many houses and other building in the renaissance and baroque styles were destroyed either by fire or by enemy shelling. Dubrovnik has been a UNESCO world heritage site since 1979, and has kept the same layout since 1272. It was rebuilt so that the traces of this terrible period are slowly disappearing, and with them the bitterness of the inhabitants.



Antun Perušina, Headmaster of the Dubrovnik Hotel and Tourism School

Never again: a hole in the wall of the Franciscan Monastery caused by an unexploded shell!

'You have to be able to forgive, but you must never forget' I was told by Antun Perušina, director of the Dubrovnik Hotel and Tourism School, who was himself shattered by the events of this period. And indeed, unless there is forgiveness, peace and reconciliation are hard to imagine between communities which have treated each other so badly. On the other hand, forgetting such events would be dangerous, as it is vital to keep in mind the lessons drawn from these terrible times. Antun Perušina added, 'You cannot imagine how perverted human beings can become in time of war; on both sides barbaric acts were committed, acts which in peacetime no-one could imagine'.

Today Dubrovnik is once again a true haven of peace. Hence the importance of the **2009 Annual Conference** being organised, following our tradition, in accordance with the European values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity. Peace is always dependent on tolerance and moderation in politics, culture, social relations, religion and philosophy. Our challenge for this year is to provide a meeting place for all the nations represented in the AEHT, and especially for the different nations of Ex-Yugoslavia: this will be a symbol of the peace-making efforts of the AEHT's Annual Conference.



The AEHT Executive Board

The March meetings of the Executive Board, the Presidium, the Council of Elders and the Competitions Committee are described in detail in John Rees Smith's article available at www.aeht.eu;

before giving a brief account of these meetings we would like to give you some practical information about the 2009 Annual Conference, which may also be accessed via the organisers' website www.tusdu.hr (accessible via a link at www.aeht.eu).

Registration will take place on-line in much the same way as in 2008, though the software used has now been improved, and the **electronic registration** form is now available on the above website. The documents for the competitions are now being finalised and should be published in early June.

Please be aware that you must first of all register yourself (by creating your own account) by choosing your own user-name and your own password. Following registration you will receive by e-mail notification of the link enabling you to activate your account and to gain access to the registration form. An online tutorial will show you how to register. The AEHT membership identification code is the only link between this software and the AEHT's database. For security reasons (and to prevent double entries) the programme accepts only one contact person (and so creates only one account) per school. When pre-registering it is vital that schools register students for competitions at this stage, even under fictitious names, in order to guarantee them a place. The information may then be changed subsequently on-line. Once you are registered you can download a proforma invoice which is located at the edge of the same web page. Following receipt of your payment the original of the invoice will be sent to you by post.

The organisers will provide free **transfers** between the hotels and Dubrovnik airport (Zračna luka Dubrovnik) or the coach station (Autobusni kolodvor Dubrovnik), where students or teachers from the local Hotel School will greet you with an AEHT sign. In addition, by showing your Conference badge, you will be entitled to use, free of charge, the public transport links between the hotel and Dubrovnik old town. For your return journey, the dates and times of the transfers will be posted in the hotel foyers.

The brand new Valamar Lacroma Resort Hotel, which opened for the first time in May 2009, will be the base for the Dubrovnik Conference. Most of the competitions will take place there. A total of eight competitions will be organised:

Competition:

Culinary Arts
Pastry
Restaurant Service
Cocktail bar
Flambé
Management
Front office/Reception
Presentation of a tourist destination

Venue:

Popiva Restaurant
Tirena Hotel
Popiva Restaurant
Lacroma Resort
Lacroma Resort
Lacroma Resort
Tirena Hotel
Lacroma Resort

The conference programme will also include numerous highly interesting excursions and local craft workshops – participants will register for these events after their arrival.

Workshops:

1. Traditional crafts of the Dubrovnik region:
 - Konavle embroidery;
 - Lace work and weaving on traditional costumes;
 - Hand-make soaps;
 - Production of bitter orange marmalade.
2. Introduction to scuba diving in a swimming pool.



John Rees Smith flanked by hostesses in traditional dress



Helena Cvinkl savours the delicious Ston oysters

Excursions:

1. Guided tour of Dubrovnik Old Town – commentaries available in English, French, German and Italian
2. Pelješac Peninsula (Ston)
 - Wine road
 - Oyster production
 - Salt production
3. Konavle
 - Agro tourism
 - The Silk Road (lace and weaving)
4. Elaphites archipelago
 - Trip on the 'Karaka' sailing ship – a replica of an old Dubrovnik sailing ship
 - Lunch on board
5. Međugorje – a whole-day excursion to the Marian Shrine

All conference delegates will be allocated accommodation in two neighbouring **hotels**. The Valamar Lacroma Resort and the Argosy Hotel are both part of the Dubrava hotel village, located in a park on the Lapad peninsula, about 4.5kms from the Old Town. A regular bus service provides transport to Dubrovnik Old Town (the terminus) and the journey takes 15 minutes.

The **registration fee** for students in a double room at the 3-star Argosy Hotel varies between €495 and €534. Prices for directors and teachers vary between €550 and €777 according to the choice of hotel (3-star Argosy Hotel or 4-star Valamar Lacroma Resort), the reservation period and the type of accommodation (single or double room). These prices include all the activities on the programme (though of course exclude any personal expenses). Please note that the early bird rates will be available until July 15th, and that after this date there will be an increase of €50 per person. The registration deadline is September 30th 2009. We hope to see a lot of you there!



3-star Argosy Hotel Valamar Lacroma Resort

In mid-March the Executive Board had the opportunity of seeing first-hand how well advanced the preparations for the next Annual Conference were. After a busy meeting (see the minutes at www.aeht.eu under the Meetings and Reports rubric) they could visit only the Old Town of Dubrovnik since the Lacroma Hotel was being used for official ceremonies, and the restaurants and most of the competition venues would still be a building site until the end of May.

Just as we did in March 2009, allow yourself to be guided through the old town to have an enchanting foretaste of what awaits you in November. As you pass through the 'Pile' gate, the main entrance to the town, you come out onto the Stradun (or Placa), Dubrovnik's main pedestrian thoroughfare, 300 metres in length. This is a wide paved avenue in the very centre of the town, built on the former marsh which separated the Roman settlement of Ragusa built on the rock from the Dubrava settlement located on the mainland. When the town became larger during the Middle Ages, the marsh was drained and became a thoroughfare. On your right as you pass through the Pile gate you can see where the old aqueduct delivers its water which saved the town from dying of thirst during the hostilities of the 90s. Below the aqueduct you can see one of Onofrio's magnificent fountains (in which, in times of plague, you had to wash before you were allowed into the town). Opposite the fountain is the Franciscan monastery, containing Europe's oldest pharmacy.



The Large Onofrio's Fountain, built in 1438, with its 16 sided pool and its domed roof is located at the outlet of the old 12km long aqueduct.



The Franciscan Monastery – an architectural masterpiece dating from 1337



Europe's oldest pharmacy

At the end of the Stradun, just before you come out onto the old port, take a right into the Pred Dvorom, where you will see the Small Onofrio Fountain with its octagonal pool and its bas-relief sculptures dating from 1441. Then you reach Dubrovnik Town Hall, located in a beautiful baroque building. On Friday March 6th the Presidium had the honour of being the guests at a drinks reception (well, a juice reception) hosted by Antun Kisić (the deputy mayor), Djuro Market (the Town Councillor responsible for Tourism), Miho Katičić (the Town Councillor responsible for Education and Culture) and Jelka Tepšić (Director of the Dubrovnik Tourist Office). After the reconstruction of the town, the main preoccupation of these protagonists is now the revival of the tourism industry; they are greatly helped in this task by Antun Perušina, whose hotel schools counts among the best in Croatia.



The 16th Century Sponza Palace. – formerly the customs house and mint (ahead) and the Town Hall (right)



Reception at the Town Hall - Louis Robert and Antun Kisić (Deputy Mayor) exchange presents

There are a number of other sights worth seeing in the Pred Dvorom:

- *The Church of Saint Blaise – patron saint of the town since the 10th century, whose feast-day is celebrated on February 3rd.*
- *The 12th century cathedral, rebuilt after the 1667 earthquake and incorporating many additions down the centuries.*
- *The gothic and renaissance Rector's Palace, former seat of the Ragusa government which followed a somewhat curious system whereby the Rector was elected for just one month, during which time he was held prisoner in his own palace!*

Go back across the main street and into Prijeko Street (the name means 'beyond' and recalls the time when an arm of the sea, now filled in, used to be located here). Then visit the network of narrow streets with their clothes-lines high in the air – one of them, Zudioska (Jews Street) contains a minute synagogue which is still used for services. Don't forget to climb up onto the 12th century ramparts, 1940 metres long, which surround the town and provide a splendid panoramic view over the rooftops and the Adriatic Sea.



Some more picturesque scenes in Dubrovnik

The elections for National Representatives are well under way, and in most countries the results are already out:

COUNTRY	Successful candidate
ALBANIA	VAQARRI Flutura
AUSTRIA	ENENGL Klaus
BELGIUM	SIEBENS Herman
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA	SPASOJEVIC Boris
BULGARIA	Result awaited
CROATIA	BARANASIC Vesna
CYPRUS	ANDILIOS Nicos
CZECH REPUBLIC	Result awaited
DENMARK	KÜHLWEIN KRISTIANSEN Soren
ESTONIA	RAND Neeme
FINLAND	NIEMINEN Marit
FRANCE	COLLINET Annie
GERMANY	WEBER-POHL Sibylle
GREECE	NIKOLAKOPOULOS G. Nikolaos
HUNGARY	SASVARI Akos
ICELAND	PEDERSEN Helene H.
IRELAND	O'HARA John
ITALY	MERLONE Rinaldo
LATVIA	OZOLINA Silva
LITHUANIA	STASIUNIENE Birute
LUXEMBOURG	ROBERT Louis
MACEDONIA	NIKOLOVSKI Zoran
MALTA	ABELA Reginald
MONACO	No candidates
MONTENEGRO	DUSKO Lucic
NORWAY	ANDREASSEN Stig
POLAND	PIENKOWSKA Boguslawa
PORTUGAL	PAIS Ana Paula
ROMANIA	PIRJOL Razvan
RUSSIA	VASILIEVICH IVANOV Evgeny
SERBIA	VICIC Slavoljub
SLOVAKIA	SENKO Jozef
SLOVENIA	SPEC Jana
SPAIN	Result awaited
SWEDEN	LARSSON Arne
SWITZERLAND	GARTMANN Marc
THE NETHERLANDS	Result awaited
TURKEY	CELIK TAS Aydin
UKRAINE	PALCHUK Marina
UNITED KINGDOM	No candidates

In the following countries there was either only one candidate or only one school, so that outgoing members were automatically re-elected: Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland,

However in Italy the job of National Representative seemed to be more sought after: seven candidates put their names forward and the race looked as if it were going to be hard run. Out of the 111 schools entitled to vote, 63 returned their ballot papers. In order to ensure the impartiality of the vote-counting, none of the candidates took part in it. On May 12th the votes were counted and Rinaldo Merlone, director of the IIS A. Prever in Pignerol in the Province of Turin in Piedmont, was declared winner with 25 votes. Like all the other people elected, he will not begin his mandate as member of the Executive Board until November 19th 2009, the same date as the elections for membership of the new Presidium.



The General Secretary together with Alfonso Benvenuto and Maria Rosella Bitti, respectively the former and present AEHT representatives in Italy



Rinaldo Merlone, Headmaster of the IIS A. Prever in Pignerol and next Italian Executive Board member



After the first ever election in Norway in the AEHT's history, Stig Andreassen from the Trondheim school had his mandate renewed

We would ask all National Representatives who have not yet organised elections in their country, or who have not yet counted the votes, to do so as quickly as possible, sending a report of the results to the AEHT Head Office (secretariat@aeht.lu) by May 31st 2009. We should be informed of any challenges or irregularities by June 20th 2009. The Head Office would like to extend its sincere congratulations to all those who have been elected.

Each year the AEHT works closely with the ACCOR Group to organise placements for teachers. What are these, you may ask. First Céline Jeantet-Gorre, Assistant to the Director of Human Resources for ACCOR Hotels, sends out a letter to the Group's hotels. Certain hotels agree to accept teachers from AEHT member schools for placements lasting from

one to two weeks. These placements can take place in one of the following departments: Reception/Rooms Division, Housekeeping, F&B, Restaurant and Group Services/Marketing. This information is available at www.zshg.waw.ids.pl/aeht_accor_gl.html which is also accessible via a link from our own website. An initial list of placement offers for this year was published in early April by Magdalena Wagłowska-Krziuk at the Zespół Szkół Hotelarsko-Turystyczno-Gastronomicznych Nr 1 ul. Krasnołęcka 3 PL-00-734 Warsaw Fax: (48) 22 840 48 97 E-mail: aehtaccor@wp.pl Magdalena is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the placements.



Magdalena Wagłowska-Krziuk, who manages the ACCOR placements on behalf of the AEHT



Céline Jeantet-Gorre from ACCOR's Human Resources Directorate

Any teacher who would like to take advantage of one of these placements, as long as it is still available, should download the application documents from the website quoted above, complete and sign them and send them off as soon as possible, together with an application letter and official authorisation from the school, to Magdalena Wagłowska-Krziuk. Magdalena will then inform you as quickly as possible whether or not you have been accepted for the placement you have requested. After the placement, participants should send to Magdalena Wagłowska-Krziuk the questionnaire and the travel expenses claim together with the relevant receipts. We welcome any photos and articles which we could publish in our newsletter. The Head Office will check the documents and pay the subsidy due to the participant. This consists of a maximum contribution of €200 per participant, from which the administrative fee of €80 is deducted. The following countries are not required to pay the administrative fee: Albania, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Russia, Serbia and the Ukraine.

Given the smaller number of placements on offer in 2009, we hope that they will all be taken up, and we

look forward to receiving a good number of applications. For your information, to find the cheapest flights for a given destination you can consult www.momando.com. To find out which budget airlines fly to this destination, use the search engine provided by www.flylc.com.

The 13th version of the **Francoli Cup** competition took place on March 3rd and 4th 2009 at the Stresa Conference Centre on Lake Maggiore, organised by the Francoli Distillery in Ghemme, one of the AEHT's professional members.

131 students took part, from 74 hotel schools in Germany, Ireland, Italy and Malta. The company's intention in organising this contest is to become involved in the area of training while committing itself to combating alcohol abuse, making students more responsible and aware of sustainable development. This year Francoli made innovations in the contest, simplifying the rules, working with a new managing team and bringing in a new marking system which awards points not only for the drink produced, but also the bar staff's ability to encourage new tendencies and rituals into clients' ways of drinking.

In the 'After Hours' category the winners were all men: the first prize, the Francoli Cup with a study bursary worth €1,000, went to Pasquale Monte from for his 'Spellbound Pearl':

4.0 cl Chocolate grappa (Zia Mina brand)
2.0 cl Strega liqueur
1.5 cl Glucose syrup
2.0 cl Neutral cream.

The runner-up was **William Gambarini** from Brescia Mantegna and in third place was **Stefano Giacardi** from Chatillon.



Pasquale Monte bewitches the judges with his 'Spellbound Pearl'



Winners of the 'After Hours' contest

But the women soon took their revenge: the winner of the 'Happy Hours' contest was Carlotta De Respinis from Milano Carlo Porta with her 'Exotic Dream':

4.0 cl Original Deep Vodka
4.0 cl liquidized fresh pineapple cocktail
0.5 cl Malibu
0.5 cl Glucose sirop
6.0 cl Pinot Chardonnay Brut sparkling wine

The runner-up was Emanuel Bertolino from Pinerolo CFIQ with his 'Cold from the East' cocktail, and in third place came Francesco Pastorella from Canosa di Puglia with 'Murgia Free'.



Carlotta De Respinis prepares her 'Exotic Dream'



Winners of the 'Happy Hours' contest

For further information please go to www.francolicup.org.

The Atlantic Tea Festival took place from 25th to 29th March 2009 in Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal. 13 teams took part, eight from Italy, three from Portugal, one from Sweden and one from Austria.

The main purposes of the Festival are to share the culture of Atlantic Tea as a unique theme in European heritage, and to encourage the participants to use tea as an ingredient of dishes and drinks.

On the first day, the first 6 teams competed in the cooking and restaurant competitions. They had to prepare a menu with a starter, main course and dessert for two guests. During the morning and lunch time on the second day the other seven teams competed in the same categories. The bar competition for all the teams took place in the afternoon.

On the third day all the participants visited some of the major sites of São Miguel Island, including visits to the only two tea factories in Europe. That evening came the closing ceremony with a formal dinner and the announcement of the winners.

The winners in each category were:

Best Restaurant Service – Escola de Formação Turística e Hoteleira (Portugal);

Best Culinary Arts performance – Escola de Hotelaria e Turismo de Mirandela (Portugal);

Best Barman - BLT Tourism School Semmering (Austria);

Special Award for Creativity and Innovation – Escola de Hotelaria e Turismo de Lamego (Portugal);

Best Team – BLT Tourism School Semmering (Austria).

Because of the large numbers of dead and injured, and extensive damage to buildings caused by the recent earthquake in the Abruzzo region, and despite the number of registrations that was even higher than last year (170 participants from 25 Italian schools and 18 non-Italian schools – a total of 38 AEHT member schools) we unfortunately had to cancel the fifth **Competition for Hotel Reception Staff** and the third **Tourism in the City Competition** which had been scheduled for May 7th-10th 2009 in Giulianova (Teramo Province).



In 2008 Giulianova hosted 150 participants from 34 schools
Above: Sardinian dances at the Sicily stand

Elina Tuunanen and Katri Leskinen from the Jyväskylä Institute in Finland – winners of the Reception and Tourism Trophy

The organisers hope that the event will not be interrupted after such a good start, and that in the course of this year or next they will be sending out invitations to a new event to replace the cancelled one. We will keep you informed. We would like to take this opportunity to express our deepest sympathy to all our members in the region who were affected, either directly or indirectly, by this terrible earthquake.



'Teramo in tavola' has been deferred until September 2009
Because of the earthquake in the Abruzzes

Another event has had to be deferred for the same reasons: this was scheduled for April 22nd (though had not been published in the AEHT calendar) and organised by an AEHT member school, the Teramo IPSSARCT (the Giulianova school is still an annex of this school, but will become independent at the start of the new school year): as part of a larger event entitled '*Teramo in tavola*' there will be a culinary arts competition and a conference with the title '*The Gran Sasso e Monti della Laga National Park – Reality and Prospects for Sustainable Tourism and Gastronomy*'. This event should now take place at the end of September 2009. 15 schools had already registered, and 11 restaurants in Teramo and the surrounding area were already lined up to take part in April. So this event looks very promising – there's still time to register!



Gioacchino Rossini
1792 - 1868
One of the most famous
19th century composers



Gastronomy, another of Gioacchino
Rossini's great passions

The first version of the **culinary arts contest – the 'Gioacchino Rossini Gourmet' International Gastronomy and Wine Prize** – was planned for May 2009 in Loreto, Italy, but has unfortunately had to be postponed until March 25th - 28th 2010. The competition rules and the registration forms are already available to be downloaded at www.aeht.eu or <http://www.gioacchinorossinigourmet.it>. This competition is organised by the 'Einstein-Nebbia' hotel school in Loreto (AN) in collaboration with the Masters programme in 'Culture and Marketing for Gastronomy and Wine and Hospitality' run by the University of Macerata. The objectives of the competition are summarised below:

- promotion and development of international relations between the Marche region and the rest of the world;
- promotion of gastronomy and wine studies in the Marche thanks to collaboration between hotel and catering training institutions;
- reinvention of traditional or well-known recipes using ingredients from the Marche, by the addition of a new variant;
- enhancement of the creativity and professionalism of all the participants through analysis, study and research on Gioacchino Rossini from the point of view of history, music and gastronomy.

Be creative, by tempted by Gioacchino Rossini's motto, which urged us to 'reinvent continuously a new variant, while remaining faithful to the main melody, like a new thread being introduced into the weaving of a piece of cloth'. Register for this innovative competition by June 15th 2009!



Jardim Atlântico Hotel



Escola Profissional de Hotelaria
e Turismo da Madeira

Because of the current economic crisis and the difficulties it is causing for the organising school, the seminar scheduled for June 17th – 21st 2009 on '*Mediterranean Cuisine with Summer Flavours*' in Funchal on the island of Madeira, has had to be deferred until next year. The organisers have provisionally proposed June 16th – 20th 2010 as the new dates. For further information please contact directly Maria Tomásia Figueira Alves, director of the organising school (Tel. :+351-291700380, e-mail alvesmt@madeira-edu.pt).

The programme for 2010 should be much the same:

On the menu for June 17th to 21st is the seminar entitled '*Mediterranean Cuisine with Summer Flavours*' in Funchal on the island of Madeira, Portugal. The programme includes:

- A guided tour of the 4-star environmentally friendly 'Jardim do Atlântico' hotel;
- Visit to a lettuce production unit (water culture) in Estreito da Calheta;
- Dinner at the Forte de S. Tiago with a lecture entitled 'healthy eating';
- A boat trip and visit to the Ribeira Brava fish farm producing sea bream;
- Visit to a wine cellar in Cabo Girão;

- Visit to the municipal market where the participants will buy regional produce (fish, fruit, vegetables) to be used in preparing a Mediterranean lunch with summer flavours;
- Visit to the production kitchen at the Porto Mar hotel.

THIS AND THAT

News from AEHT Members

1. News from our Prize-winners

At the suggestion of Mary Owens, the AEHT's national representative in Ireland, we launched this column in 2008. Its purpose is to report on the views of former prize-winners on how their experience of the AEHT has influenced their personal and professional development and the careers they followed after they had won prizes at the Annual Conferences. We would be glad to receive contributions from competition prize-winners for future editions of this column.

- Phelim Byrne gives us his views



Phelim Byrne – winner at the Berlin Annual Conference in 2000

Phelim Byrne is a chef from Blackwater in County Wexford, Ireland. He is currently the founder and chef/proprietor of Phelim Byrne Enterprises based just outside Wexford town, a business entering its third successful year, which consists mainly of a cookery school open to the general public with courses ranging from a day or night intensive program to a longer 6 - 8 week development course and a professional catering service offering fine dining, & elegant banqueting services to the private and corporate market.

He began his training in Kelly's hotel in Rosslare and after completing a City and Guilds program in 1998 and working for two years in the hotel he

was nominated for a place training in professional cookery with Failte Ireland in the Waterford Institute of Technology for a two year program. After graduating with a distinction from this program and developing a further foundation in cooking skills, general kitchen knowledge and personal / professional development he was placed in the Park Hotel in Kenmare for his final placement of the program. After this he was awarded a scholarship by Failte Ireland to the Johnson and Wales University in the United States for a trip of a life-time development program in 2001. Upon his return to Ireland he was given the position of head chef at Dunbrody country house hotel in Arthurstown, Wexford where he remained for four and a half years before setting about implementing his long term goal – to open his own business which he now independently owns and operates.

Phelim Byrne is listed among 'Ireland's Best' by John and Sally McKenna's prestigious Bridgestone Guides for 2007, 2008 and 2009; he is regularly quoted in the Irish media, and publishes his recipes in his weekly column in the People Group publications; they are also broadcast in cookery slot on South East Radio.

We were very impressed by this career and wanted to ask for Phelim Byrne's views on a range of topics:

1. In 2000, you won the cooking competitions at the AEHT Annual Conference in Berlin. How did you prepare yourself for this competition?

Training for the AEHT conference in Berlin was a combination of previous experience and developed skills coupled with intensive in-house training by the chefs at the Waterford Institute of Technology; there was also my determination, ambition to achieve the best possible and the expertise and support of my mentor and fellow chef lecturers at the college, trips to Dublin for tastings and practice sessions (I mean I carried half a lamb on a train from Wexford then via taxi to the kitchens in Dublin!!)

2. What are your greatest memories of this event?

My greatest memory of the event is probably in a few stages, the support and knowledge from our advisors and trainers that travelled with us and all the time leading up to the event – all this is as clear in my mind as if it were yesterday; the nerves soon settled once I was in my uniform, something that has never changed!, however it was the moment my name was called out as the winner of the competition, it was unbelievable, moving and I will never forget how proud I was as long as I live!

3. Do you still have contact with other participants?

We formed a strong bond together, both participants and mentors, even though I rarely see any of them when I do it as if we were childhood friends, a special bond that will always remain one of the most important in my life.

4. Did winning this competition affect your professional and private life as well as your personality?

Winning this competition gave me such confidence, and I don't mean in an arrogant or cocky way, it is the biggest turning point in my life, I've never looked back since and I'm so much happier now, as for my career it was the 'key to the door' for every single step I took after this, whether it was for jobs, competitions, awards and my tireless determination to progress further and further professionally.

5. What do you think about the AEHT and the Annual Conference experience today?

I have such respect for the AEHT conference and only wish I could be involved in the future to help prepare a student taking part in the event and even going onto the winners' podium, just as I did through other peoples' help. The atmosphere was fantastic, the most memorable and happy experience of my life.

6. Did you experience the European spirit at the Annual Conference in Berlin? If so, did it open new horizons to you? Did it encourage you to follow your training abroad?

The whole experience broadened my mind to different cultures and tastes, there was a positive vibe about everybody and the whole experience, perhaps if my career had followed a different path of opportunities I would have spent some time in Europe and the AEHT competition was definitely a positive and encouraging starting point.

Phelim Byrne has won a large number of awards:

- From 2007 to 2009 Phelim Byrne's cookery academy has been acclaimed by Bridgestone Guide;
- In 2007 Phelim Byrne received the award for the best start-up from the Wexford County Business Council;
- In 2007 he was proclaimed Regional Champion in the Shell Live Wire Young Entrepreneur of the Year contest and won the National Showcase competition at the all-Ireland finals – a competition intended to highlight national talent.

- In February 2004 he won two gold medals and two bronze medals at the International Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Exhibition in Istanbul, where he represented Ireland as a Euro-toque chef in the World Cooking Championships.
- In December 2001 he was awarded the Teddy McGuivney Memorial Award from WIT (Waterford Institute of Technology).
- In October 2000 he won a gold medal in the Cooking Championships at the AEHT Annual Conference in Berlin.
- In 2001 he led the winning team at the New York Food Show.



7. You have won a series of medals at international competitions. Why was it important for you to participate in all those competitions?

I have a competitive nature anyway, I feel these competitions are a great reward after a couple of years of really hard work, it's like the pay rise you can't buy, also as this is a lifestyle not just a career if you take it seriously it's almost a part of life; but you must practice and work to the limit, otherwise you will not succeed.

8. What was the most important award you won (you are the most proud of) and which award you would still like to win and why?

The most important award I have ever won was the gold in Berlin in 2000 at the AEHT conference, it was as I stated earlier the 'key of the door' to not just my professional career but to the rest of my life, it brings a tear to my eye now as always when I think of the experience and I often think of just how lucky and proud I am of the award and always will be; as for the future, currently I have won a few business awards for hard work and commitment to the cookery school and catering company. I always had a dream of the Bocuse d'Or however!

9. What competitions should the AEHT add to the series organized at its Annual Conferences?

I am a strong believer that cooking classics properly is the foundation to a great chef, learn how to cook what the chefs in the college teach you, its maybe not Michelin star stuff however you learn the skills, knowledge and basic confidence of how to cook properly. You need to know how to cook before coming up with your own dishes I think, so maybe a competition of 'the classic with a face lift' or something like that.

10. What important changes have you noticed in the culinary and hospitality sector during the last years?

Exactly what keeps us going – it changes every day, you never know it all and if you think you do you're finished, people are becoming more educated with food, however some chefs don't realize that often the simplicity of a dish and relying on the quality and freshness of the ingredients can be one of the major keys to success.



Phelim Byrne Cookery Academy in Wexford



Scallop skewers

11. What made you open the Phelim Byrne's cookery academy in Wexford in February 2007?

I've had a life-long dream to do something different like my business, as I said earlier I am ambitious, my hands aren't tied any more and it's thankfully proven to be a major success.

12. What were the objectives and what are the results so far?

The objective of the school is to follow the 'real food real people' philosophy, teaching in a unique style and one-to-one tuition that I know is so rewarding from my own career as a chef

13. What are your future projects?

We plan to extend the cookery school shortly, it is going really well at the moment, and we are also extending the school to extra premises outside of Wexford as part of a three year development program. The outdoor catering is growing by the day, but

it doesn't happen on its own, it's a lot of hard work, commitment and clear thinking.



14. What are the most important qualities of a Chef? What recommendations would you like to give up-and-coming chefs? What advice would you give to students in hospitality and tourism for the future?

Remember the career I chose was a lifestyle not just a career, to be successful get that clear straight away as it can be a hard hurdle to jump when you are young, giving up social life, sport etc; however I would not turn back the clock for anything, you will fall in love with the industry and there are so many returns, just choose carefully, try work for a while in the best establishment that will take you, the advantages are phenomenal.

To find out more about the activities of Phelim Byrne's company, please go to <http://www.phelimbyrne.ie>.

2. Restalingua - an effective translation tool for restaurant menus

In the following article we should like to give you a demonstration of the use of the Restalingua translation software: we used it to translate the menu for the lunch offered, as part of their campaign to promote and protect Luxembourg's culinary heritage, by the Office for Agriculture, the Department Technical Services to Agriculture, the Our and Haute-Sûre Nature Reserves, together with several Luxembourg producers: all of these bodies were responsible for producing a lunch prepared exclusively using ingredients produced in

Luxembourg, on May 11th 2009 by the Alexis Heck Hotel School in Diekirch, Luxembourg:



Some of the organisers and distinguished guests

Louis Robert with Dr Christiane Vaessen from the Office for Agriculture

Aperitif:

Luxembourg Sparking Wine served with Luxembourg Cheeses and Onion Rings

Starter:

- Duo of nationally produced hams served with a salad and goats cheese
- Cream of Sorrel and Chervil
- Warm Cooked Ham served on Sauerkraut and Garden Beans

Main Course:

Farm-reared Entrecôte Steak with Béarnaise and Pinot Noir Sauces with a selection of Vegetables and Potato Gratin

Dessert:

Pastry Cook's Trilogy

Rhubarb Tart, Baked Apple, Scoop of Vanilla Ice-cream



Duo of hams served with a salad and goats cheese

Cream of Sorrel and Chervil

The attached translation was made using the programme available at www.restolingua.com :

Antipasto:

Crémant di Lussemburgo accompagnato da formaggi lussemburghesi ed anelli di cipolla

Primo :

- Duetto di prosciutti di 'Marca nazionale' con insalata di formaggio caprino
- Crema d'acetosa e cerfoglio
- Prosciutto cotto caldo con fave e crauti al naturale

Secondo :

Costata di manzo con salsa béarnaise e salsa al pinot nero, verdure assortite, gratin di patate

Dessert :

Trilogia del pasticciere

Tortina al rabarbaro, Mela al forno, Gelato alla vaniglia



Farm-reared Entrecôte Steak

Pastry Cook's Trilogy

At present the software available at this website enables users to translate any professional menu into eight languages: Chinese, Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Spanish.

Restolingua is currently seeking schools willing to coordinate the work of translating the 22,000 expressions into all the languages of the AEHT member countries which are not yet available, and to add expressions relating to regional specialities, dishes and ingredients. If you are interested in this work, please contact directly the Restolingua director Paul R.A.J. Van den Heuvel or the Head of Operations (Paul's wife), Arike Vermazen (email : arika.vermazen@gmail.com) and look at the rates and the agreement signed by the AEHT and Restolingua at www.aeht.eu. Send us your menus if you would like them published in other languages in a future edition of the Newsletter.

We look forward to seeing you all again in Dubrovnik.

Nadine SCHINTGEN
AEHT General Secretary

Text: N. Schintgen with contributions from J. Rees Smith, F. Rocha, Ph. Byrne
Photos: N. Schintgen, M. Gaillot, Ph. Byrne,
Organisers of AEHT events
English translation by J. Rees Smith

Our professional partners:

