

**A BIT OF HISTORY**  
**HOTEL & CATERING REVIEW - MAY 1977**

**OVER  
TORY**

Quiet, yes; complacent, no. Two characteristics of the new president of the Irish Hotel and Catering Institute, James A. Flannery, a graduate of the Shannon College of Hotel Management who - after an apprenticeship in practical hotel management - is now Bord Failte's Registrar and Senior Development Advisor - Hotels. The second part of the job label is the more important because James Flannery is anxious that hoteliers should use all the facilities available to them to develop management techniques to increase the viability of their establishments. It would be difficult to separate Jim Flannery, the Bord Failte advisor, from Jim Flannery, president of the increasingly-prestigious Irish Hotel and Catering Institute.

**A Profile by**  
**Edward Mac Sweeney**

**James A.**  
**Flannery**

**-QUIET MAN**  
**WITH A PURPOSE**



**continued**

Failure to realise the complexities of catering management - financial management and personnel management - as well as the direct contact with the consumer is creating problems for management today, says Mr. Flannery.

Talking of his own days at Shannon he recalls that when he left he was equipped to do a number of things well, but they were the practical skills. Today education in the hotel colleges has developed considerably to focus more attention on appreciation of the financial side of hotel operation, personnel management and marketing.

One of the aims of the Institute over the next couple of years will be to encourage management development.

'The Institute is a professional body to enhance professional standards and serve the industry. We must look towards members' needs, endeavour to create a climate to encourage development and introduce management development programmes to keep abreast of current problems.'

In co-operation with CERT the Institute will seek to establish members' development needs and endeavour to satisfy them.

'New entrants to the industry are now highly qualified, but the industry is not yet fully-g geared to take advantage of this. Young men, discovering the situation when full of enthusiasm, find themselves frustrated or else they switch off. We must encourage an opening-up of minds, identify the needs of people in the industry and encourage training bodies to provide the appropriate courses. We must make full use of fresh minds.'

During the present month Jim Flannery and a number of associates from Bord Fáilte - including the eight hotels advisors - are taking a special intensive course (for which they asked) in the Business Studies Department of UCD under the direction of Professor Anthony Cunningham. The aim is to update themselves on the economic side of business development in order that they can effectively advise hoteliers on the investment economics of their operations.

**SPECIAL ROLES**

Jim Flannery is to seek an informal meeting of the presidents of all bodies concerned with the catering industry so that they can inform each other of the areas in which they are working. In the past when such meetings have been called by one body or another there has always been a holding-back as if one or other felt a take-over was being planned. 'There is no intention of even contemplating a take-over,' says the IHCI president. 'Each body has its own special role to play in the industry, and I feel it would be helpful to all of us if we could establish better communications with each other.'

Communications are a matter of deep concern. He wants to ensure better communication with Institute members and believes that this can be achieved, in part, by holding some Council meetings in the provinces during the year. Local members will be invited to discuss developments with the Council. There is to be greater involvement of members in the work of the Institute through working parties on specific subjects. This has already been done to some extent and is to be broadened. 'Not only will this increase involvement of non-Council members of the Institute in the profession's affairs, but it will be most helpful because these members will not have to be concerned with the broader work of the Institute's Council.'



'Profession' and 'professional' are words which Mr. Flannery uses throughout discussions on caterers and catering. He is concerned that the caterers themselves should appreciate that they are professionals and conduct themselves on this level. 'The Institute already has established a Code of Conduct and this will be carefully monitored over the next year. Discipline among professionals is important but any Code of Conduct can only be as good as its implementation. If it is found satisfactory it will be incorporated in the Institute's by-laws.'

**MANAGEMENT FLOW**

Mr. Flannery believes that the flow of management between the hotel/restaurant sector and the institutional/industrial sector is good and comments that managements from the last-named are invariably very cost conscious.

At the present time membership of the Institute is about equally divided between the two sectors and in the autumn the first examinations admitting new applicants to membership will take place. Graduates of hotel colleges will have an automatic right to admission - those who have completed three years practical work to membership, and the others will become associates.

Catering management must be seen by young people to be a challenging profession if it is to attract the best newcomers, says Mr. Flannery. 'There will always be young people who, for one reason or another, cannot go to a hotel management college and enter the industry as management trainees. The Institute is developing a curriculum for home study for these trainees to enable them to learn the theory of the profession in their own time - if they cannot take advantage of block release courses - and sit for the intermediate and final examinations admitting to membership of the Institute. This should be ready within the next two months.'

The programme for the Institute's coming year appears a heavy one, but Jim Flannery appreciates the foundation work of his predecessor, David McCaughey, and with his new Council and working parties intends to build on it. He is concerned for the future of the profession and for its standards - physical and financial - and he has the great gift of any president, a sense of humour.

