

Les Clefs d'Or

by Elvis Soiza Chief Concierge, Sofitel Brisbane Grand Central



Elvis Soiza, Les Clefs d'Or President.

International Congress

In March the 56th Union Internationale des Concierges (UICH) International Congress was held in Hangzhou, China to great success. I asked one of our newest members, Dorothea VonGnielinski, Chief Concierge of the Brisbane Marriott Hotel to report back on the congress. As a new member attending her first ever International Congress, this is what she had to say:

"I have just returned with great excitement from the 56th UICH International Congress in China as part of a small but vocal and immensely proud Australian contingent. Proud because in our midst we had the newly elected 3rd International Vice President, Colin Toomey, Chief Concierge at the Shangri-La Hotel, Sydney and Past President of Les Clefs d'Or Australia and excited because after many years working as a concierge I had finally attended my first Les Clef d'Or International Congress.

"It has been an overwhelming experience to mix and mingle with fellow concierge from every continent and all corners of the world, to share experiences and learn from the leaders in our profession through both workshops and social interactions. There have been so many highlights that I find it very hard to single out one moment.

"Was it going to be the first welcome dinner, a slightly daunting thought knowing that I only knew three other people in a crowd of three hundred? I needn't have worried. The first two people I met were the President and Treasurer of the Norwegian Chapter and they couldn't have been more welcoming. After briefly catching up with our Australian President and meeting for the first time some of my Australian colleagues I found myself sitting at the dinner table with two members of the Canadian Chapter, one being the National Secretary who showed

a very keen interest in everything that is happening in our country and who throughout the conference always remembered my name and asked me how I was enjoying myself.

"Or was it meeting the charming Past International President Roger Bastoni who despite his busy schedule took the time to personally meet so many of us? Or maybe the workshop run by the charismatic and vibrant Holly Stiel, a professional speaker with nearly 20 years concierge experience and author of the concierge bible *Ultimate Service?* Or witnessing our long serving Australian Past President Colin Toomey as



Murray Rowbotham and Dorothea VonGnielinski.

he was elected to the position of 3rd International Vice President with a commanding majority and listening to his inspiring speech? A personal highlight was certainly meeting the concierge team from my hometown of Munich, especially Massimo Francucci, who was a doorman at the Park Hilton Munich almost 25 years ago when I was a young apprentice there and who is now the Chief Concierge at the Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten Kempinski, one of Munich's oldest and traditional luxury hotels.

"It doesn't matter, where in the world we work, how big or small or famous our hotels

are, we all felt like one big family and I know that I now have friends all over the world who can help me and sometimes make the impossible possible for our guests. I have returned home feeling inspired, empowered and proud to be not only a concierge but a member of Les Clefs d'Or Australia."

Concierge Ball

The Prestigious Black Tie Hospitality Ball is coming back again this year. It is being held at Palazzo Versace on the Gold Coast on Saturday 21st November. Tickets cost \$110 per person, which includes a fabulous 3-course meal, wine, beer, soft drinks, dancing and a show. For further details contact Elvis Soiza, Chief Concierge, Sofitel Brisbane on 3835 3535 or email H5992-CR01@accor.com

Les Clefs d'Or Members International

3RD VICE PRESIDENT:

COLIN TOOMEY,

The Shangri-La Hotel, Sydney

Australian Chapter

PRESIDENT: ELVIS SOIZA,

Sofitel Brisbane Grand Central

SECRETARY:

MICHAEL ANDERSON,

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TREASURER: STEVE CIRIC,

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