



# INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN BUTLERS

Promoting Service Standards through Training in Staffed Homes, Luxury Hotels, Resorts and Spas

*The Institute is dedicated to raising service standards in private estates and the hospitality industry by broadly disseminating the mindset and skills of that time-honored quintessential service provider, the British Butler, adapted to the needs of modern employers and guests.*

## THE MODERN BUTLERS' JOURNAL

For Service Professionals Worldwide

Volume 5, Issue 7 – July 2009

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



*NOTE: We received quite a number of heartfelt responses to the last issue of the Journal. Below is just a small selection of these.*

Dear Mr. Ferry,  
Hear, hear! Thank you so very much for expressing what I have found as well – as a trained chef for 10 years

and since 1993 as a houseman / house manager, I am currently looking for a new full-time position – but have encountered the self-serving and unprofessional attitude of a couple of agency heads / school administrators who seem more interested in getting my \$ or that of a potential employer, than in making a good [long lasting] placement. I applaud your taking the time to address these issues in the industry. Things are tough enough without us losing sight of integrity and ethics, and the reputation of the professional domestic employee. I look forward to your next missives in future issues.

*Roger Schlins, Maple Grove, MN*

Kudos (Mr. Ferry),

I always enjoy your monthly visit to my computer, however the June issue was very refreshing. So often we professional domestics are expected to politely walk away from diversity. Bully to you, bully good man, for preaching your message of truth!

Please give Mr. Heath the thumbs up on his article about butlers meeting butlers. I had a similar experience in London, however, with a much more positive conclusion.

*Lloyd White, Carmel, IN*

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Dear Editor,

I applaud your newsletter this month.

This is a growing trend in the United States to “look out for number one” and to believe that the “ends justify the means”. Get a profit at any cost--honor be dashed. I thank you for taking the time to point out that this attitude can not only harm the service industry, but the ripple effect will negatively impact our national economy, as well. Having worked closely with (a luxury provider in LA) a couple years back, I was disappointed when I found out what one

of the owners stooped to do for appearances sake...and it caught up with him.

We need to remember to act honorably in all situations and go to sleep each night with a clear conscience.

Thank you again, for the reminder. I am but one ordinary person, but if there is anything I can do to assist, please let me know.

*G.J. dePillis*

*Los Angeles*

## A SIGN OF THE TIMES...

*Dear Steven,*

Believe it or not we did not just vanish into the ether. This entire time we have been trying really hard to set up the show with a production company so we could then go out and sell it to a network. Here is the problem we are running into... Everyone seems to love the idea of a show about butlers and butler training, and everyone loved the video you put together. They thought you were charming and funny and a great personality. However, the feeling across the board seems to be that they want someone running the school who is more critical, volatile, sarcastic, likely to snap at a student, etc. They feel this will give them the conflict and drama they need for the show. The sad truth is that you are too nice, polite and gentlemanly for television!

We will continue to try to convince the production companies otherwise, but I must be honest and tell you that I think it's a long shot at this point.

If anything changes we will of course let you know immediately. I hope all is well with you and you continue to enjoy your travels around the world.

*Jennifer*

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You made me laugh, Jennifer! I can see the problem: I was suspicious from the get-go that this might be a non-starter and leaned as much as I could in the direction of controversy when I made that video.

I think it could have worked 50 years ago, when people were more upright and upbeat, and less mean. I wish you well in hawking the idea.

*All the best,*

*Steven*



## HISTORY OF CHAUFFEURING PART V

### FIRST PARADES

*By Frank Mitchell*

#### EVERYDAY CHECKS

A 'first parade' is a military term used to describe the checks a driver is required to do before starting his or her vehicle for the first time each day. First Parades would be standardized for each vehicle in the fleet depending on whether it is a tank, truck, or normal motorcar. As a chauffeur, we should conduct similar, simple checks at the beginning of every day.



#### PUDDLES

Puddles under a vehicle indicate leaks and are an immediate cause for concern. Do not drive a vehicle if it has an especially large puddle underneath. If there are small drops on the

garage floor every morning, this is also a cause for concern. Remember, if a car has a clean engine and chassis, it will be easier to see where the leak is occurring. If you can identify the fluid, it will help determine the location of the leak. Do not touch the fluid; many vehicular fluids will harm you. Brake fluid in is very corrosive and harmful to skin and eyes. It tends to be clear (sometimes it is coloured red) and has a higher viscosity than water or petrol. Even a small hydraulic leak is cause for great concern because it will be bigger when pressure builds up. Consider the vehicle unsafe

to drive until an expert has said otherwise. Petrol can be mistaken for water but you should be able to identify it by its smell. Water from the radiator should be coloured by antifreeze. Yellow and even bright lime green is common, but some manufacturers use a concoction that actually looks like rusty water. If you see such a leak, compare it to the water in the radiator over-flow bottle as confirmation. A puddle of clean water forming under a car in summer may simply be condensation from the air conditioner. Refer to experts/the owner's manual on older cars; small leaks may actually be normal, especially if it has a centralized chassis lubrication system.

#### WINDOWS, BELTS AND BAUBLES

Check that the windscreen, windows, mirrors, lights and reflectors are not cracked. By law they must be clean. Check that seatbelts are secure and working (yes, daily!) When you start the car, make sure that all the warning lights come on briefly (bulb and fuse check) and then go out once the engine is running. Now is a good time to check the fuel level too.



*UN personnel assist a journalist to conduct a 'First Parade' before a logbook will be issued.*

#### TYRES

Daily checks on tyres should include looking for:

- Signs of excessive wear or damage from road debris, potholes or curbing.

- Remove debris such as stones or glass, embedded in the tread using a screwdriver.
- Do not attempt to remove objects such as nails that may have penetrated the tyre. Replace the wheel with the spare. Wear eye protection for safety or deflate the wheel once the car's weight is on the jack.
- Even if the nail can be removed easily, *don't*; you will just be making it more difficult for the tyre shop to find the hole again.

In the next issue, we'll take a look at the many safety checks that should be conducted on the vehicle at varying intervals.

*Frank Mitchell is a professional butler and butler trainer for the IIMB. He lives near Cape Town in South Africa and can be reached via email at [frankmitchell@modernbutlers.com](mailto:frankmitchell@modernbutlers.com)*

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#### SEEKING COOK / HOUSE MANAGER / HOUSEKEEPER

Joyful, loving couple with baby in Chicago (possible winters in California) is looking for a butler/cook/house manager to take care of beautiful 3600 sq foot duplex condo and the family who inhabits it. We are seeking someone with excellent detailed cleaning, cooking and organizational skills and relevant experience, someone with a service heart, experience in working with fine surfaces, antiques, and delicates. The person should be impeccably organized, a wonderful cook and have a love of children. Must be a good communicator with a joyful spirit. Must have valid driver's license and be fluent in English.

If you have familiarity with these or similar duties and have relevant experience, please submit your resume and salary requirements at your earliest convenience to [enquiries@modernbutlers.com](mailto:enquiries@modernbutlers.com)



**YOU ARE  
CORDIALLY  
INVITED TO  
PARTICIPATE  
IN A PRIVATE  
SERVICE  
WORKSHOP &  
BRUNCH!**

*by David M. Bertnick*

Nearly a year ago, the IAPSP introduced a monthly workshop and networking meeting for private service professionals in Los Angeles, California, called 'Second Sunday.' I am happy to report that members of the Los Angeles community have been successfully meeting on the Second Sunday of each month to discuss relevant and member-requested topics such as Estate Manuals, Career Transition Strategies, Time Management, Handheld Technology and Social Media, among others.

*Second Sunday* has been visited by people from as far away as Houston, Denver and Indianapolis. With our open-door policy, participants have ranged from managers of boutique hotels and concierge services to personal assistants, estate couples, household managers, personal chefs and estate managers. We've even been visited by sorority-house moms, professional organizers and a staffing agency or two! This type of variety in the attendees has been welcomed and has proved to be one of the most rewarding and inspiring parts of the meetings for me, as I witness the camaraderie build in the group.

Once the workshops begin, it becomes clear that within this diversity there is a shared conviction to be our best and to provide the highest standard of service possible to an elite clientele. We also discover the common challenges we encounter because of this goal. I believe that the common threads that bind our monthly group together will do the same with the community at large. It is this type of

fulfillment that is at the core of the IAPSP's mission: to celebrate and encourage professional service in its purest form – while honoring each other with dignity and creating a strong and healthy community along the way.

As *Second Sunday* nears its first-year anniversary, I would like to say thank you to everyone who has found the time to participate in our meetings and make them such a fantastic success. Whether this was by attending, sharing topic ideas with us, forwarding our invitations to friends, contributing financially to the IAPSP or simply by sharing your Los Angeles candidate lists with us - we are better and more robust because of you. Thank you!

If you would like to participate in a *Second Sunday* Workshop or receive invitations to our meetings, please add yourself to our distribution list by entering your email address in the "Get Email Updates" box on our website ([www.iapsp.net](http://www.iapsp.net)) and then click on "Go." Be sure that you tick the box that says "local meetings." While you are there, you might choose to keep up on other news from the IAPSP, including updates on our Inaugural Conference for private service coming this fall to Dallas, Texas. This one and a half day event is built on the successes of *Second Sunday* and is sure to transform lives.

We love to meet new people. If you know of anyone in the Greater Los Angeles area who might benefit from *Second Sunday*, please spread the word. If you are not in Los Angeles, but would like to attend a *Second Sunday* Workshop, please send an email to [second.sunday@iapsp.net](mailto:second.sunday@iapsp.net) and ask how to start a meeting in your area.

*David Bertnick is the President of the International Association for Private Service Professionals (IAPSP) based on Los Angeles.*

## **INTERESTING LINKS**

**BELIEVE IT OR NOT, MAN U STARS HAVE TEAM OF BUTLERS!**

LONDON, June 2009: Manchester United stars, it seems, are treated better than the Royal Family. According to the club's left-winger Patrice Evra, all the multi-millionaire stars have a team of personal butlers to cater for their every whim.

<http://sports.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Man-U-stars-have-team-of-butlers/articleshow/4610606.cms>

### **GLUTEN- AND DAIRY-FREE AFTERNOON TEA AT THE LANESBOROUGH**

If like most people these days you are watching your intake of additives and chemicals, then you may want to visit The Lanesborough, who have just added a gluten- and dairy-free version of its traditional afternoon tea.

<http://luxurylanesboroughhotellondon.blogspot.com/2009/06/gluten-and-dairy-free-afternoon-tea-at.html>

### **ZAGAT SURVEY REPORTS SOBERING NYC NIGHTLIFE**

Still, The Big Apple Is a Great Place to Party – go to

[http://www.hotel-online.com/News/PR2009\\_2nd/Jun09\\_NYCNightlife.html](http://www.hotel-online.com/News/PR2009_2nd/Jun09_NYCNightlife.html)

**\$490 MILLION HYDROPOLIS UNDERSEA RESORT AND HOTEL SOON TO OPEN IN DUBAI**  
\$5500 per Night Offers Missile Defense System as Security - go to

[http://www.hotel-online.com/News/PR2009\\_2nd/Jun09\\_HydropolisDubai.html](http://www.hotel-online.com/News/PR2009_2nd/Jun09_HydropolisDubai.html)

### **THROUGH THE EYES OF A HOTEL BUTLER: Achieving Guest Satisfaction**

*by Osvaldo Torres Cruz*

When Ellsworth Statler opened the Buffalo Statler Hotel in 1908, he initiated differentiation within the hospitality industry by offering for the first time a private bathroom for each room, a light at the door, a pitcher of water for each guest and the morning paper.

[http://www.hotel-online.com/News/PR2009\\_2nd/Jun09\\_ButlerServices.html](http://www.hotel-online.com/News/PR2009_2nd/Jun09_ButlerServices.html)



### **WHY LACQUERING SILVER IS A BAD IDEA**

*by Jeffrey Herman*

Lacquering silver and silverplate is generally not recommended because of the difficulties in obtaining

a uniform coating, even when applied by a professional refinisher. If the coating has not been applied well, it may even have streaks and small holes, so that when the object retarnishes, it could look worse than if no coating had been applied. Lacquer will also eventually yellow and crack, allowing tarnish to form within the fissures and eventually under the protective coating. Lacquer can easily chip or wear off of contact points on objects that have individual parts, such as covers on sugar bowls, coffee and teapots, boxes, salt shakers, and the like. Strong solvents must then be used to remove the lacquer and the piece refinished, not always successfully.

If an object is placed in an open display where surface protection is necessary, an archival micro-crystalline wax such as Renaissance is recommended. Renaissance will not yellow and will last for years if handled properly. Since Renaissance wax is not as durable as lacquer, the object should be handled with cotton gloves since acid from your fingers may eventually remove it. Renaissance wax can be purchased from Cutlery Specialties

([www.restorationproduct.com](http://www.restorationproduct.com)).

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*Mr. Herman owns Jeffrey Herman Silver Restoration & Conservation and can be contacted via [jeff@hermansilver.com](mailto:jeff@hermansilver.com). Visit his website: <http://www.bermansilver.com>*

The Institute is the only organization teaching butler skills with a focus on the mindset and superior communication skills of the traditional butler as applied to the modern world's service needs. Contact us for all your training needs via email at [enquiries@modernbutlers.com](mailto:enquiries@modernbutlers.com) or via telephone: USA 1-813- 354-2734. We invite you to also visit our website, <http://www.modernbutlers.com> for more information.

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