



Society of Actuaries in Ireland 25th Anniversary Conference



L to R- Bruce Maxwell, Geoff Mulgan, Tom Mulcahy, and Chris Daykin.

On the eighteenth of September 1997, the Society of Actuaries in Ireland marked the occasion of our twenty fifth anniversary with a very successful conference themed 'Looking forward to the next 25 years and beyond'.

We were very lucky to have four excellent guest speakers from a diverse range of backgrounds - Tom Mulcahy, Chris Daykin, Michael O'Leary and Geoff Mulgan. Each gave an excellent and stimulating speech as they shared their insights into the challenges and opportunities that the next 25 years will pose. I hope you all gained as much food for thought as I did from the day.

The day was rounded off by a most enjoyable reception and dinner. Duncan Ferguson spoke of how the Society has now come of age and is a respected independent body. He presented the Society with gifts from the Institute, a painting of Staple Inn and a gavel for use at our meetings. David Norris gave the after dinner speech to a rapturous reception - a fitting end to an excellent day!

The anniversary conference and dinner were the best attended functions ever hosted by the Society. It was wonderful to see so many members and guests join in the celebrations.

Very many thanks are due to the PR committee who organised the whole event, Paul Duffy, John Feely, John Gibson, Michelle Roche and Dervla Tomlin and they were ably supported in their usual understated manner by Mary Butler and Margot Lawlor. From the many positive comments I have received I know that I am not the only Society member who is eagerly awaiting the follow up from this Committee.

Bruce Maxwell

WELCOME

to the October 1997 issue of the Society of Actuaries Newsletter. This is the first issue to be produced by the new PR/Communications Committee. We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Marese Hussey for all the hard work she has put into producing the newsletter over the last few years.

We plan to develop the newsletter even further, starting right here with an invitation to all members of the Society to participate in future editions. We aim to expand the newsletter to include comments/suggestions/articles from members of the Society, along with a few changes of our own to spice up your reading!

The Students' Society will also provide us with a column for each issue, and each of the Society's committees will update us on their work. From time to time we will also include articles from special guest contributors.

The newsletter will be produced every 2 months so if there is anything you want us to change or cover for the December issue, please let one of the team know. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Michelle Roche
Editor

AN ACTUARIAL CAREER IN A CHANGING WORLD

This is the title of a research project presented by Lucy McCarthy and my wife Deidre Johnston as part of a Higher Diploma in Career Guidance at University College Dublin. The report is 120 pages long and covers aspects of the actuarial profession against the backdrop of a range of career guidance theories. Copies of this report are held in the Society's office, however I have volunteered to highlight some of the information from the report that would be of particular interest to actuaries. Lucy and Deidre want me to express thanks to all in the profession who completed the questionnaire and especially to Mary Butler, John Caslin, Bill Hannan and Des Ryan who gave a lot of support and help. It was a very worthwhile project in terms of their diplomas.

SURVEY

The entire qualified membership of the Society were surveyed on the 20th December 1996 and 126 members responded out of a total of 167. The employment background of those replying was:

Life Office 55% Employee Benefits 22% General Insurance 8% Other 15%

The other areas cover investment, education, reinsurance, pension settlement and information technology.

REASONS FOR BECOMING AN ACTUARY

The following outlines the factors that might have influenced the actuary to make his or her career choice.

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Using Mathematics	59%	33%	8%
Remuneration	47%	47%	6%
Route to Business World	30%	35%	35%
Status	7%	45%	48%
Other	11%	7%	82%

Actuaries obviously wanted to use mathematics and be reasonably well paid for doing it. Achieving a high status was not a great influence.

SKILLS NEEDED COMPARED TO EXPECTATION

It is interesting that having gone into a career to use mathematics that the use of mathematics was considerably less than expected as shown in the following table:

	Much More	More	As Expected	Less	Much Less
Communication	38%	32%	29%	1%	0
Computing	38%	32%	28%	2%	0
Management	28%	34%	34%	3%	1%
Negotiation	27%	41%	26%	6%	0
Marketing	27%	42%	25%	4%	2%
Legal	18%	39%	28%	12%	3%
Maths	0%	5%	24%	61%	10%

It is interesting to ask whether the current education and examination structure matches the needs of the profession in their working life.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

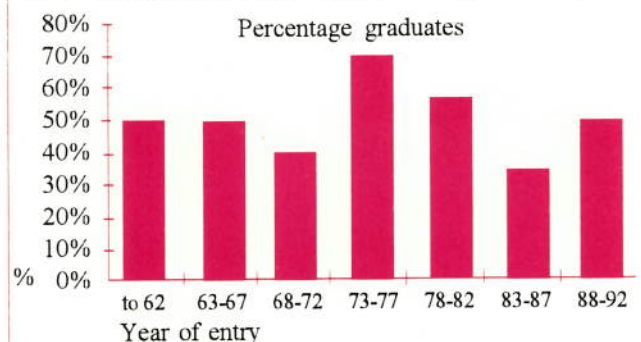
The following are the socio-economic groups that the actuaries are drawn from based on parents occupation.

Professional and Management	61%	Clerical	16%
Skilled Manual	17%	Agricultural	6%

Approximately 28% of actuaries attended private schools. 48% had university degrees and 77% of these were mathematical.

PERCENTAGE GRADUATES

The table shows that graduate recruitment has varied over the years. The advent of the highly successful UCD and DCU actuarial courses may well mean that the profession will move further towards graduate entry.



RECOMMEND THE PROFESSION TO A CLOSE RELATIVE?

Whether you would recommend the profession to a son, daughter or other close relative was a soul-searching question and the answers showed on balance a positive view from the profession:

Strongly Recommended	14%	Recommend	66%
Would not Recommend	20%		

With regard to how members viewed the prospects for new entrants going into their particular field the results were as follows:

Very Favourable / Favourable	65%	Neutral	26%
Unfavourable / Very Unfavourable	9%		

The following is an interesting split between the various Fields.

	Life Office	Employee Benefits	General Insurance	Other
Very Favourable	51%	66%	100%	83%
Neutral	33%	31%	0%	11%
Unfavourable/ Very Unfavourable	16%	4%	0%	0%

Clearly the people in General Insurance see a rosy future ahead while those in the life offices are not so sure.

There is obviously a great deal more information in the original report especially with regard to individual contributions made by actuaries on their fears and hopes for the profession.

Brendan Johnston
12th June 1997

THE ACTUARY AND THE IRISH PUBLIC

On Tuesday May 27th, following the AGM, John Lyons and Paul Duffy of the Society's PR Committee presented a discussion paper on 'The Actuary and the Irish Public'.

Our new president, Bruce Maxwell, opened the meeting by referring to the 5 questions posed on page 2 of the paper and said that these questions formed the basis of the areas for discussion.

John Lyons began the presentation by giving some background as to why it was written. It had been inspired by Bill Hannan and was intended to produce some ideas for the future, taking into account UK development e.g. the adoption of a mission statement and strategic aims by the Institute and Faculty. The PR committee had come up with a number of suggestions and these would be outlined later.

John then spoke about the image of the profession and how this might be improved, who should be targeted and what our message might be. He touched on recent presidential addresses both in Ireland and the UK which had also influenced the paper.

Paul Duffy then spoke on the subject of strategic aims. He questioned whether we are doing enough to market ourselves as experts in statistics and to protect our position as experts in the area of financial mathematics. He wondered about our current standing and level of influence and how these might be improved. He said that we should consider the Society's role in serving the public interest and that the various committees should reflect on this when planning their activities.

A wide-ranging discussion followed including such areas as possible conflicts with other organisations, promoting public interest issues even when it 'hurts', the value of a mission statement, whether we should 'pronounce' on wider non-actuarial issues, raising our profile as experts in risk management, introducing intermediate qualifications. After the discussion, all of the suggestions in Appendix 1 were approved (some unanimously) by way of a show of hands.

Stephen Doyle

Student Society

Welcome to the first regular column dedicated to students and the issues that affect us most.

Over the summer months, a number of events were organised by the committee, with varying degrees of success. The staff of Johnny Fox's pub in the Wicklow Mountains were horrified when the peace of a beautiful July evening was shattered by the arrival of a busload of people shouting "Show us the beer". Apparently, someone had told them to expect a quiet group of reserved, mature, insurance-related people. Sadly, that's not what they got. A few lemonades in the beer garden were followed by admission to Johnny Fox's famous "hooley night", including their very own riverdance. Everybody enjoyed the night, although some of our members close to the stage had to dodge flying feet.

Slightly less successful, was the annual indoor football 5-a-side tournament, with turnout below that of previous years. However, those teams who turned up made the most of the day that was in it and congratulations go to Irish Life, who retained their trophy.

The postponed go-karting finally took place, with quite a large turnout. Despite a few setbacks, without which no students event would be complete, driving got underway at about 8.15p.m. Many members' alter-egos emerged, mild-mannered actuarial students becoming Damon Hill meets King Kong. Thankfully, there were no injuries, except for the odd bruised ego, and in the ancient tradition of "May the best man win", frequent cries of "My kart's not working right", and "if it wasn't for that turn" were heard. Congratulations to Paul Walsh, who I am sure will be back next year to defend his title. Get practising.

On a more serious note, with the final decision on the timetable for changes to the exam structure due in December, this November's Student's Consultative Committee meeting may be your last opportunity to have your opinions voiced. If anyone has anything they would like brought up at this meeting, please let me know by the end of October.

The next event planned is the AGM, which will be held in November, with the topic of EMU under discussion. Further details will follow. I look forward to seeing you all there.

Fiona Daly

Calendar of Events

Tuesday 21st October	Evening Meeting/Dinner President's Address	Speaker:	Bruce Maxwell
Tuesday 4th November	CPD Meeting /Dinner "Risk adjusted investment performance measurement"	Speaker:	Peter Lockyer Alexander Clay
Tuesday 18th Nov	CPD Meeting /Dinner "Financial engineering in General Insurance"	Speaker:	Colin Garlick Swiss Re
Thursday 4th Dec	Healthcare Seminar "Financing Health Care - Actuarial and Economic Perspectives"	Venue: Time:	Stakis Hotel Dublin Registration 8.30am .finishing with lunch at 1.00p.m.

UCD Bachelor of Actuarial & Financial Studies Degree programme

On the 4th of November, 1997, the fourth graduating class in the UCD BAFS programme (31 students) will receive their degrees. This year has been an excellent one for students looking for employment as actuarial trainees with 21 of these students obtaining such employment as follows:

Irish Life	6	Howard Johnson	1
Eagle Star	3	Hibernian	1
Watson Wyatt	2	Scottish Provident	1
Irish Pensions Trust	2	Ark Life	1
Lifetime	2	Canada Life	1
Mercers	1		

Moreover 4 of the students have obtained employment in the Banking/Finance Sector (Central Bank of Ireland, Morgan Stanley - London, Barclay's Bank - London and AIB - Dublin). Five of the graduates will be taking up post graduate study in Statistics (2), Computer Science, Management Sciences and Finance (1 each)

Phil Boland and Gareth Colgan, UCD

All CPD and Evening Meetings take place in the Stephen's Green Club. Tea/coffee served from 6.00p.m. Meetings commence at 6.30p.m. followed by dinner at approx.8.30p.m.

Council 1997/98

Emer Chapman has joined Council as Chairman of the Functions Committee.

HEALTHCARE SEMINAR DATE CHANGE

Date: 4th December 1997
Theme: "Financing Health Care-Actuarial and Economic Perspectives"

Chairman: **Dr. Garret Fitzgerald**
Speakers: **Donal Duval**, former Australian Government Actuary.
Brian Duncan, Actuarial Consultant.
Daniel Whitaker, Health economist with National Economic Research Associates in the UK.
Alex Isted, Munich Re.

On the Move

Elaine Fennessy has moved from Friends Provident to IPT

Anne Gaffey from Ark Life to **Friends Provident**

Colin Parkinson has moved to **KPMG**

Nigel Tennant has moved from Norwich Union to **Segrave-Daly & Lynch**

John Feely has moved from IPT to **Scottish Provident**

Ann Muldoon has moved from Lifetime to **ERC Frankona**

Declan Moran has moved from Irish Life to **VHI**



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