



## ***Robert W. Holden***

*R. W. "Bob" Holden was a renaissance man who enjoyed a career as a consummate hotel professional. A licensed pilot, avid sailor, scratch golfer, marathon runner, tennis player and musician, Bob was also a third generation hotelier. He grew up in the hotel business, working in his family's inn and restaurants in Michigan. Following his service in World War II, Bob entered the hospitality industry, eventually joining the Sheraton hotel chain, where he was assigned increasingly responsible management positions. In 1969, he was named regional manager for Sheraton's growing Hawai'i operations. He later was promoted to President, Hawai'i, Pacific and Far East ITT Sheraton and led the corporation's development of hotels in Asia*

*Bob's insights about the needs of the industry made him a strong supporter of travel industry education. He was the founder of the Visitor Industry Education Council in 1973. The Council was formed to take the story of Hawai'i's visitor industry and its importance to the general public. He also served as an advisor to the University of Hawai'i School of Travel Industry Management, the Waikiki Improvement Association and as board chairman of the Hawai'i Hotel Association and the Hawai'i Visitors Bureau. As chairman of the Hotel Association, Bob initiated the Visitor Industry Charity Walk and sponsored scholarships recognizing the achievements of students from community colleges, providing them with the means to continue their education.*

*As Hawai'i regional director for Sheraton, Bob expanded its operations to take advantage of the growing market for tourism. Under his direction, Sheraton added new wings to the Princess Ka'iulani and Royal Hawaiian hotels and he opened Hawai'i's largest hotel, the Sheraton Waikiki, in 1971.*

*Bob's leadership in the expansion of Sheraton's Hawai'i operation is still evident to this day in the strength of their presence in the islands.*