



ROSTRUM

INFORMER

August 2014

Newsletter of Rostrum Western Australia

www.rostrum.com.au/wa

A Fly on the Wall

Conversation overheard at a recent Rostrum Club meeting, between Wanda and Wally (not their real names):



Don't be a Wally.

Get together with others in your Club and fast-track your development by stepping up to a higher platform of experience where you will use ALL your communication and presentation skills.

The AGSOY entry form is on the back page. Just do it. *Freeman Karen Reid, Coordinator AGSOY*

Rostrum Developments



This time last weekend (as I write this, not as you read it), the music from *Les Miserables* was still playing through my head. “What’s that got to do with Rostrum?” I hear you say. The answer: - If there hadn’t been an Australian Rostrum Council meeting in Adelaide, I wouldn’t have gone to the show. As it was a low airfare and a low cost hotel, I was hooked. Of course, soon

after I booked they announced that it would be coming to Perth in January next year. Oh well, I’ll just have to go and see it again!

Back to Rostrum – and plenty of good news on the home front. First, we have a new Director of Marketing in Denise Bradley from Club 42. Denise is a past member of Rostrum, who has just re-joined. She has background in marketing and has already come up with some great ideas, so watch this space!

Second, we have decided to move back to our own website. The national web site is still having problems and also won’t link to our intended new marketing format as shown at the April Dais meeting. We are just finalising the brief and plan for the web site to be up and working by September. This is to link with a proposed marketing campaign, which we plan to launch as soon as the web site is in place and it will run through to early December.

Now the news from the ARC meeting. The good news is that we will soon have a new national constitution. As you’ll remember, this was started last year but zones didn’t agree with the proposed approach, so it had to be started again. The proposed constitution reflects the way we actually run with the zones being members and nominating a Director from within the zone. Interestingly this no longer has to be the President, so we can get some continuity in place. If you’re wondering why this is happening, when it doesn’t seem as though anything is changing, it’s because when the ARC was established there was no facility to establish a truly national body and the current constitution is registered in South Australia. With the new constitution Rostrum will be registered as a National body.

The other news is that Tasmanian Rostrum is developing what they have called an Accelerated Development Program, based on exercises from the current PDP and IDP programs. The intention is that this will be offered to businesses to fast track people through the program more quickly. Fine detail is still being worked out. I’ve asked them to include us in the loop, as we have been thinking along similar lines to encourage younger people to take up the challenge. If anyone is interested in participating in this approach, please give me or Luke a call.

The ARC weekend also included the national final of the Rostrum Voice of Youth competition and this will be fully

written up in Juliet’s report. I just want to add that each year I am blown away by the standard of speaking that the contestants present, and this year was no exception. As I listened, particularly to the Seniors, I kept thinking “that was a winner”, only to have the next speaker surpass them. A real challenge for the adjudicators!

Now back to WA. At the end of the month we held our second club based Dais meeting with an excellent turnout of around 30 people. Club 50 did us proud with hot finger food and yummy sweets, as well as wine and soft drinks. The actual meeting, which was short and sharp, was followed by discussion on meeting format and program content. Karen Reid and Susan L’Herpinierie then provided lots of advice on how to approach the Speaker of the Year, with Susan delivering a speech and then dissecting it and explaining how she’d put it together. Valuable material and with eager listeners, I’m sure we’ll have a great competition this year.

By the time you read this, I’ll be over the hills and far away. Well actually, over the seas and far away. Luke will be leading in my place, ably supported by the rest of the Dais Board. Thankfully, we have people who help run Rostrum for all of us. Luke’s invitation and challenge to all of you to step up and give back to Rostrum appears below. Both you personally and Rostrum will benefit if you take it up.

Freeman Tony Lightman, President, Rostrum WA

New Opportunities – An Invitation from the Vice President

An outstanding opportunity is waiting through a door to your left, slightly ajar, where you can hear voices bantering back and forth, as chortles and laughter muffle the words. Do you walk on by leaving the door alone and one day ask yourself what all that fun was about? Or do you pluck up your courage and take the handle in hand?

Grasping the door handle you take the plunge and are surprised at the chorus of ‘welcomes’ that greets you. ‘Please, come in and join us and we hope you enjoy your time with us.’

You my friend have just opened the door of opportunity that is Rostrum WA.

As you look around the room, greeting everyone, you realise this is not like any other Board, this is not a Board of stiffs, this is a Board of warm smiles and interesting characters. One you think might just be right for you.

“Opportunity knocks once and then moves on”. Are you grasping your opportunities? Rostrum has an outstanding opportunity for you to develop and grow more skills.

I have an outstanding opportunity for you: an opportunity for you to grow, personally and professionally, like never before. An opportunity for your CV to be better than ever before and land at the top of the recruiters’ piles every time.

Like everything that has great returns, it will require determination, inspiration and motivation to succeed.

Nothing looks better on a CV than experience. Trust me, I have been a recruiter and nothing is more impressive than extracurricular activities that show professional development and outstanding commitment to personal growth.

So why not volunteer, step up and help out in your club committee or, better still, on the State Board? Taking on these roles will help you grow like never before.

Do you want to organise events or manage projects? Do you want to take leadership roles at work? Do you want to be more valuable in your organisation? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you will benefit from volunteering for a committee role in your club or on the Board.

What roles are available and what do they entail? These positions are available now or will soon become vacant:

1. **Dais Secretary.** This is my current role. Taking on this challenge has shown me how to record meeting minutes accurately, succinctly and with clear actions to be taken; by whom and when. You will learn in a supportive environment the skills to become brilliant at preparing for meetings, recording important discussion points and how to better communicate actions to attendees after meetings. For more details please contact me at secretary@rostrumwa.com.au.
2. **Coordinator of the Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year and Annual Dinner,** Rostrum WA's prestigious speaking event. This will develop your marketing, organisational and project management skills. If you nominate soon, you can understudy Karen Reid for the rest of the year, rather than taking it on blind. This role involves promoting the event, coordinating registrations, organising venues and scheduling heats. For more details contact Karen at agsoy@rostrumwa.com.au.
3. **Training Executive.** Wayne Passmore is stepping down as Director of Training but fortunately Ruurd Speelman is taking over. However, Ruurd needs support and this is an excellent opportunity to learn from a master. If you are an Accredited Critic and interested contact Wayne at directoroftraining@rostrumwa.com.au or Ruurd at freemen@rostrumwa.com.au.
4. **Marketing Committee.** Denise Bradley is the new Director of Marketing. Like training, marketing is better with a team so, if marketing's your thing, contact Denise at directorofmarketing@rostrumwa.com.au.

The people in these roles have given their all and, as a member of Rostrum, you've benefited from their giving. Now they need a change and Rostrum needs new blood and new ideas. Yes, it will take some of your valuable time but not excessively and you'll gain much more than you give. I look forward to working with you. Join other Dais members and make Rostrum better today!

Luke Matthews, Secretary and Vice President, Rostrum WA

Speakers impress at Rostrum Voice of Youth Final



Senior winner Joshua Dunne and Junior winner Max Richardson

Ten finalists from city and country secondary schools put their public speaking skills to the test in front of family and friends (and adjudicators) in the State Final of the Rostrum Voice of Youth on Saturday 28 June at the Boulevard Centre in Floreat.

Months of preparation, and perseverance through heats and semis, culminated in an afternoon of well-researched and confidently delivered speeches which entertained, informed and impressed audience and adjudicators alike. All the speakers demonstrated insight and maturity of thought in their speeches; to quote Chairman of Adjudicators, Freeman Ruurd Speelman, 'the best yet'.

Joshua Dunne and Max Richardson, both from Hale School, won the Senior and Junior sections respectively. Rebekah Craggs (Corpus Christi College) was the Senior runner-up and Louise Miolin (Kearnan College) the Junior runner-up.

Congratulations to Joshua and Max on winning the opportunity to represent WA in the National Final in Adelaide in July (see below) and to all the speakers on their inspiring efforts. Thank you to Juliet Park on another great RVOY competition, Freeman Karen Reid for helping with the short-notice speeches and Freeman Ruurd Speelman.

STOP PRESS

The National Competition was fantastic. The two boys did not place but had a fabulous time and came back with great new experiences and a new network of Rostrum Voice of Youth friends.

They spoke with confidence and did an excellent job. Max Richardson, who is only 12 years old, gained a wealth of speaking experience and he came back with new resolve to do it all again next year. Joshua Dunne is now off to university but will become part of the working team for Rostrum Voice of Youth. So all in all it's been a good year – and now I'm straight back to gearing up for next year.

Juliet Park, Coordinator Rostrum Voice of Youth

Introducing two new members to the Rostrum WA Board

Jay Antunovich Derek Sparkes

WEBMASTER

TREASURER



I'm Jay and I have been with Foothills Club 11 for about four years now. Because of my dyspraxia (which is difficulty with controlling fine and gross motor skills and speech) I was shy and avoided interaction with others. I was encouraged to join Rostrum by former member Peter Thackray, to whom I owe a great deal for his continued support and wise counsel.

I was so nervous in the first few attendances that I would easily have given up, so my parents bribed me with a trip to an AFL game in Melbourne if I completed a year with the club. Winning the Club 11 Critic award for the Most Improved Speaker of the Year in 2011 was a hugely motivating experience.

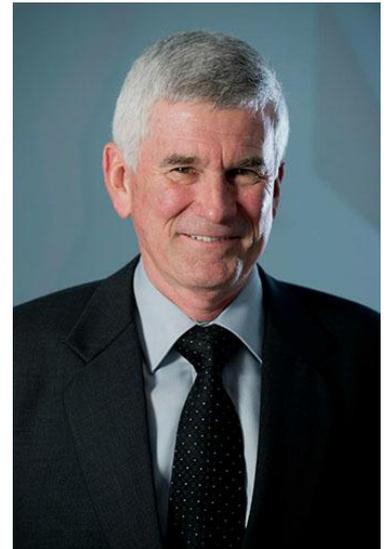
I am so glad that I persevered, as Rostrum has brought me to a group of people whom I now consider as my extended family. I did not dream that I could overcome my fears and being presented with the Clive Carrington Encouragement Award was a humbling event in my life.

Late last year our state Secretary and Vice President Luke Matthews nominated me for the position of Webmaster for WA. I nervously accepted the challenge and am still working hard to establish some expertise in the job, having never before been on a board. My sincere thanks go to everyone who's had the courage and belief in me to support me in this position.

In my family, we have always been encouraged to believe that something for nothing has no value and that 'only he who digs the well should get to drink the water'. Putting something back into Rostrum is a small repayment for all that I receive from being part of a great organisation.

Jay Antunovich, Webmaster

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"Theories have four stages of acceptance:  
1. This is worthless nonsense;  
2. This is interesting but perverse;  
3. This is true but quite unimportant;  
4. I always said so."  
~~~~~  
JBS Haldane (1892-1964) British biologist and polymath
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I joined Rostrum in 1984 and have been a member of a number of clubs, beginning with Club 36 Busselton.

Work colleagues I knew prior to moving to Busselton were members of Rostrum Club 11. They endeavoured to get me along but I didn't have the confidence to make presentations to strangers. Following the move to Busselton, however, I was

so impressed with the presenter at a training meeting that I asked him for his secret. He mentioned he'd learnt his skills as a member of a Rostrum club. I joined the following week.

When I moved back to Perth in 1988 I joined Rostrum Club 17 Victoria Park, of which I'm a Life Member. I became a Critic in 1986, was re-accredited in 1990 and continue serving as Critic on a regular basis – currently at Club 50.

Rostrum gives me the opportunity to present and maintain the speaking skills I have obtained. I enjoy being a Critic and passing on those skills to others. Watching and hearing new members develop is one of the delights of maintaining Rostrum membership.

Currently I attend Club 33 – the Constitutional Club – which comprises an eclectic mix of young and those not-so-young. Our meetings in the Constitutional Centre's Board Room have an ambiance which is quite different from the usual meeting places. An interesting event in my many years in Rostrum was arriving at a particular club's meeting venue and being barred access by the venue's bankers. Due to unpaid interest, the bank had taken mortgagee's possession.

My role on the Dais Board is that of Treasurer. After initially putting off a request I felt obliged to take on the role. Being on the Board has helped me to appreciate the amount of work being done to ensure Rostrum continues to be a viable and worthwhile organisation.

Outside Rostrum, my days are spent having fun as a Financial Planner – I've been having fun for 25 years. My other interests include running, cycling and playing golf. I enjoy participating in Run for a Reason, the freeway Bike Hike and City to Surf, and I'm also a Life Member of the Roleystone and Districts Youth Club. And, of course, I'm a keen supporter of the Fremantle Dockers, loyal through years of upset and glory.

*Derek Sparkes, Treasurer*

# The winning speech – breaking it down and building it up

Last year's Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year Winner Susan L'Herpinere and Runner-up Joanna Whitney have written their thoughts on the messages they were eager to communicate to their audience. Both speakers gave excellent examples of public speaking that is highly effective and most compelling. Anyone who was present at the Final would wholeheartedly agree.

Winner SUSAN L'HERPINIERE Club 50



*The Country of the Blind*

'The aim of my speech was to make people think about the fact that, although we might not be thrilled about having CCTV cameras silently capturing images of us or that the police have "Number Plate Recognition" technology in the on-board computers in police cars, or that there are other ways of being "tracked" such as what you purchase, or where you shop etc. – does it really have a negative impact on our daily lives? The old adage comes to mind "Nothing to hide – nothing to fear". Yet, when we suddenly find ourselves needing assistance from "The One Eyed King", known in our world as the surveillance camera, it's reassuring to know we have the ability to utilise this technology to assist us. Ignorance is not bliss. When we need to have our eyes opened wide, either as an individual or as a community, we have the resources and the ability to see as much as possible. It is also reassuring to know that academics in law and sociology across the world are constantly studying the evolving surveillance society, and structures and laws are put in place to ensure the right path is charted between total surveillance and insufficient safety to us as individuals and as a community.'

Runner-Up JOANNA WHITNEY Club 11



*The Last Right*

'My motivation when preparing my speech was to encourage the audience to think beyond the obvious. I also liked the play on words – The Last Right as opposed to The Last Rite. Yes, we may all be prepared to donate our organs but it is the grieving family who have to make the final decision, at a time when they will be in shock and turmoil. While you may be very prepared to be an organ donor, not everyone thinks the same way and their rights have to be given due consideration. After all it is your family that have to live with the decision. I talked with a friend who had faced a similar situation and that helped to overlay the emotional content. For the intellect I googled 'opposition to organ donation' and used the Australian website *Donate Life* for up-to-date statistics. I always try and give the audience something to take away and mull over, to challenge their thinking.'

That's how the winners did it, but how will YOU set about preparing a speech for the Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year? Karen Reid and Susan L'Herpinere provided some of their considerable wisdom in a workshop after last month's Dais Repts meeting at Club 50, as follows:

**Choose a topic.** This is possibly the hardest hurdle to get over. There are six possible speech topics for the heats. Susan suggests you eliminate the one you like least, then also the next least-liked, and so on until you have only two from which to choose – then ditch the less-preferred one. Simple.

**Attach a theme to the topic.** Study the topic carefully – what do the words mean? Think laterally – can you attach a meaning that's not immediately obvious? Brainstorm all possible meanings and angles until something appeals. Often it's the first idea that's the strongest.

**Form an opinion about the topic/theme.** This becomes the message or moral of your speech and everything from this point on should contribute to successfully delivering this message to the audience.

**Work out the ending.** Yes, the ending before the beginning. With the message in mind, write the ending to the speech. This is the most important part of the speech because it's what you want the audience to take away, remember, and think about in the days to come. It has to be good—really good—so that the audience will be able to easily relate it back to the beginning and link up the rest of your speech into a whole. A good ending also becomes a goal for you to work towards when backfilling the rest of your speech.

**Go back to the beginning and work out the rest of your speech.** Be aware of your audience when selecting material to include. The material needs to be appealing, easily understood (not too complicated), interesting and something that the audience can readily relate to. It also needs to be entertaining and you, as speaker, need to be credible, so check your facts. If the listeners aren't comfortable they will soon lose interest and stop listening. They do not have to listen to you. It's your job to make them want to.

**Organise your material.** You'll need *an introduction* to attract the listeners and show them where you want to take them, *the body* made up of discussion points arranged logically to develop the theme and tell the story, and the *conclusion or ending* which contains your take-home message.

**Prepare it for presentation.** Edit, edit, edit. There is only so much you can speak effectively about in 10 minutes, and only so much the audience can take in. Use descriptive language and paint word pictures to carry your audience along. Can you use some appropriate gestures? Decide where to insert pauses and factor these into your timing.

**Practise, practise, practise.** Timing is essential so memorise the last two minutes of your speech to enable you to go to that part of it on the eight-minute bell. It's also useful to prepare a couple of sentences which you can include or drop as you approach the warning bell.

# Humorously Speaking

Alison White

You want to present a humorous speech, but don't know where to start? Many people are afraid of using humour and a lot of speakers, even some of the best and most experienced, are among their number. For the minority of people seemingly born with a well-developed sense of humour, read no further – you lucky son-of-a-gun! However for the majority not so favoured, there is science and art that you can employ to help overcome any deficit in your humour quotient.

For a humorous speech you can select a topic in one of three ways. You may have a true but humorous story which you want to expand into a speech, or you may have a joke or anecdote that you can expand to make a funny story. The third is to select a topic and then research material for a humorous speech. This is not unlike choosing a topic for any speech.

Humour must be relevant to your audience. What went over well in the locker room after the game will probably be most unsuitable for the church ladies guild. It is also important that your topic can be understood by the audience. It's no use having very funny material about quantum physics, unless you are speaking to a group of quantum physicists. Give your topic scrutiny on both points.

I find that the most simple and everyday topics are the best for humour. Think of all the everyday things that you do, such as walking the dog, catching the bus or going to the supermarket. Because these events are so very common, there will be a lot of material available and your audience will be able to relate to the topic. Then 'brainstorm' the topic, writing down everything you can think about it, even the most seemingly insignificant. Include any phrases that you can associate with the topic. This will give you a 'helicopter' overview and enable you to make links.

You can further refine this by taking a single word from the brainstormed list and subject it to the same treatment. It's amazing what connections and interactions can come from seeing all your ideas in front of you.

Creating original material might give you the 'edge' with a speech and you can develop one-liners, jokes and joke toppers from your assembled words and phrases. Scrutinise them and see if you can come up with an association of words and ideas to make a one-liner. For example, if your topic was about a Rostrum meeting, your brainstormed words might include *speeches (long and short), and interesting/boring*. Making a connection of association here you could come up with: *What his speech lacked in interest, it gained in length*.

To make original jokes for your speech, start with a statement of fact (SOF).

*With Rostrum all speeches are critiqued and sometimes these do not give an accurate account of the meeting and speeches. This can occasionally result in an unrealistic appraisal - or a 'whitewash' critique. (SOF)*

Joke: *The Critic gave the speech, not so much a whitewash, but a super enzyme bleach.*

Joke toppers are another original joke form that you can develop. They are usually in three parts. Start with a statement of fact:

*Rostrum has something called The Pertinent Question. (SOF)*

Joke: *Wow I thought, I have been asked many impertinent questions before, but never a pertinent one.*

Joke topper: *For my first PQ I was asked what President Obama should do in response to Putin invading Crimea? Invade Canada was my reply.*

Alright, a lot of the above humour might be viewed as corny. Well a lot of humour is corny if you examine it forensically. It is how it is used by the speaker that makes the difference. One of my favourite comedians was Bob Hope, the master of corny, but how good was he? I have seen speakers and comedians with great material go over like a lead balloon and those with relatively corny material bring down the house. It all depends on the delivery.

The internet comes in great use. Get as many quotations, anecdotes and jokes relating to the topic as possible. Also look for jokes that are not related to the topic, but might be adapted. Just because a joke or anecdote is about air travel and your speech is about bush walking, does not mean that there isn't the possibility of adaptation. Look at cartoons which are related, or can be adapted, to your topic for they are a pictorial joke and may contain usable material

Humour owes much to plagiarism; however, any joke, anecdote or quotation that has a known author, should be acknowledged.

Exaggeration is another way to add humour. When lifting a heavy object *my back went so far out it required its own passport*.

Use self-deprecation where possible. Always turn the joke or the anecdote against yourself and make yourself the butt of the story.

*Humour...should be gently blended into the material to give it some lightness, and the listeners an investment in listening to you.*

In presenting a humorous speech there are several issues to keep in mind. First make sure that your voice is loud enough to be heard. This is good advice for any speech, but particularly important with humour. It's no use having the best humorous material and jokes in the world, if no one can hear them. No one will listen if they can't hear and the audience will start to get restless. You will note that comics—particularly stand-ups—usually have a loud voice. This is so as to be heard in noisy venues, and also as a weapon of audience control. Not only can he/she be heard through the distractions that come with a public venue, the comic can control any hecklers by drowning them out.

Make sure that you leave sufficient time to pause in key places to give the material the most impact; a pause in the right place is invaluable comedic technique. A pause in other places allows time for humour to take effect and gives the audience time to laugh. If you don't give sufficient time for audience laughter, you may go overtime. Practise the

material with your long-suffering friends and family and have them make suggestions for pauses.

If your topic lends itself to costuming, go for it (visual humour). If you are talking about gardening, wear gardening clothes and carry secateurs. If the topic is about parties, wear a party hat and carry balloons and streamers. I do hope that no one is going to talk about their visit to a nudist colony!

Exude confidence. This is good advice for any speech, but with humour you will lose your audience almost immediately if you are seen to be nervous. In an ordinary speech you have time to regain ground as your confidence builds, but with humour you are probably lost from the start as confidence and humour are blood brothers.

Give your speech a humorous title, so that you can get people laughing before you even start your speech. I once gave a humorous speech about a serious operation I once had, which I called Tumour Humour. Another humorous speech I once heard, about sailing around the Mediterranean, was titled, Don't Knock the Rock.

I believe using humour in **all** speeches is a must. I think that every speech, even the most serious of topics should contain at least three items of humour, placed strategically at the beginning, middle and end. This is a minimum requirement and more should be used if possible.

When using humour in an ordinary speech, many of the same research activities apply—of researching jokes, anecdotes and quotations, developing original material, and in presentation. However, once again, it is very important that the humour is relevant to your topic. People will listen to a speech that contains humour even if it is a topic that is of little interest to them. Also, if your topic is controversial, what better way to get people to listen to a different viewpoint, but through humour?

Using humour in a general speech is not about having the audience thigh-slapping, belly-laughing and rolling in the aisles. It should be gently blended into the material to give it some lightness and the listeners an investment in listening to you.

Good luck and leave 'em laughing as you exit the podium.



Alison White lives in Mandurah and is a former member of Rostrum Club 51 (Dongara-Dennison). She is the daughter of the late Freeman Ted Joll, who was a Rostrum member for over 40 years. She is the author of *LOL (Laugh Out Loud) the Science and Art of Humour* ISBN 978 1 84963 222 5

## What's on in ...

### AUGUST

- 16 Critics Training Course  
Session 1**  
8.30am to 3.30pm  
Subiaco Community Centre  
203 Bagot Rd, Subiaco  
☺Registration essential
- 21 Dais Board meeting**  
6.15 pm  
Shenton Park Community Centre  
240 Onslow Rd, Shenton Park
- 26 Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year  
Competition**  
Last day for entries!!  
☺Entry form on back page
- 30 Critics Training Course  
Session 2**  
8.30am to 3.30pm  
details as for Session 1 above

### SEPTEMBER

- 8 Arthur Garvey Speaker of the  
Competition**  
Heats begin  
Details will be sent by email
- 9 Speak Up Speak Out Course**  
6.30 to 9.30 pm  
Tom Dadour Centre  
363 Bagot Rd, Subiaco  
☺Registration essential
- 18 Dais Board meeting**  
details as for August

Information and course registration:

Rostrum Information Centre  
PO Box 5547  
Canning Vale South  
WA 6155  
Phone 08 9463 6433  
Fax 08 9455 1215  
Email [ric@rostrumwa.com.au](mailto:ric@rostrumwa.com.au)

Thank you for your contributions to this *Informer*. **Thank you to Fmn Karen Reid for the cartoon on the front page.** Please send any club news you want to share or announcements of Rostrum events for inclusion in the October issue by **19 September** to:  
[informer@rostrumwa.com.au](mailto:informer@rostrumwa.com.au)

Rose Fogliani (Editor)

### Dates for the Informer

| Issue    | Deadline     |
|----------|--------------|
| October  | 19 September |
| December | 28 November  |

