

## 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary delivers a night of superb entertainment

*Terry O'Meara was named Rostrum WA's Speaker of the Decade 2010 at the celebration of the 80th Anniversary of Rostrum in Australia at the City West Function Centre on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> July.*

MC Fmn David Price welcomed more than 100 members and guests to the celebration and opened with a description of the founding of the first Australian Rostrum club in Sydney in 1930. Vice President Fmn Tony Lightman, on behalf of President Chris Stone, noted that whilst only one club is active in Rostrum's birthplace in the UK the WA zone boasts the largest membership in Australia. After outlining his vision for the movement's future he proposed a toast to 'Rostrum and the next 80 years'. Fmn Ken Holzman entertained with an account of his 30 years in Rostrum, giving as reasons for his loyalty the opportunity to learn life skills, meeting great speakers and great characters, being inspired and inspiring others.

The highlight of the evening was the Speaker of the Decade competition. Four winners of the Arthur Garvey trophy since 2000 presented speeches which did not fail to 'appeal to the emotions and intellect' of the audience. Wayne Passmore (Club 15), speaking on the life and achievements of heart surgeon Dr Victor Chang, implored us to have 'A Change of Heart' and sign onto the organ donor register. Karen Reid (Club 34), on the topic 'Feel the Fear', described three ways we might engage with fear and stressed that often the problem is not the fear but how we use it. Lynne Ellis (Club 52) explained how chance, destiny and fate affect us without our knowing it, yet they are responsible for us experiencing 'A Life of Contrasts'. Terry O'Meara (Club 15) told the story of young Aussie diggers who did not 'Feel the Fear' as they left for the battlefields of Europe in 1916.

The high standard of the speeches was evident and duly noted by Chairman of Adjudicators Fmn Bill Smith when he announced Terry as the winner. Fmn Osmund Perera, winner of the Speaker of the Decade 2000, presented the



*Finalists Wayne Passmore, Karen Reid, Lynne Ellis and Terry O'Meara*

trophy. In his acceptance speech Terry emphasised the speaker's responsibility to the audience to prepare his or her presentation, and the duty of the audience to show its respect to the speaker by 'showing up'.

The speeches, festive atmosphere, tasty meal and opportunity to socialise all contributed to making the occasion memorable for everyone who attended. The last word of the evening belonged to Fmn Tony Lightman: 'If you didn't attend the 80<sup>th</sup>, make sure you don't miss the 160<sup>th</sup>!'

## ...and two new Freemen

The excitement didn't end with the Speaker of the Decade speeches. Whilst the adjudicators considered their scores, Fmn David Price announced and welcomed to the ranks of Freeman of Australian Rostrum two worthy recipients of this honour in recognition of their service to the movement – Susan L'Herpinier (Clubs 50, 11) and Terry O'Meara. Congratulations from the entire membership of Rostrum WA!!



*Thanks to all the speakers and congratulations to Susan and Terry. Thanks to Adell Griffiths and helpers for organising the event. Thanks also to Mark Roberts (Club 15) for taking the photos.*

# Metro critics training workshop

*A very successful Critics Training workshop was held over the two Saturdays – 24 July and 7 August at Shenton Park Community Centre.*

Although the Community Centre was looking a bit tired (it's scheduled for refurbishment), the workshop was very lively and entertaining which helped the trainees overcome their apprehension and nerves. All the trainees delivered their practice critiques with increasing confidence and improvement over the two days.

The outcome was a very high success rate: Alain Bernay (Club 33), Aldis Purins (1/2), Carol Brands (34), Jenny Brockis (34), Marianne McAdam (19) and Wayne Passmore (15) were passed for immediate assessment to full Critic status. Look out for them at a club near you next year!

Kerry Fitzsimons (34) and John Watt (8) were certified as Club Critics for assessment later in the year. Margaret Heyns (33) will continue practising in her club and will redo the course next year. Unfortunately, Jason Lim (17) was forced to miss the second day and will also redo the course next year.

Congratulations to all participants for their commitment and the very high standard of critiquing that we saw.

Thanks to my Training Team Mavis Carruthers, Fmn Ruurd Speelman, Fmn Sue Hart and (now) Fmn Terry O'Meara. And thanks also to the volunteers who turned up to deliver the exercises for the trainees to critique. These included Adell Griffiths, Brian Digby, Fmn David Price, Greg Swensen, Karen Reid, Fmn Ken Holzman and Trevor Denholm.

*Freeman Tony Lightman, Vice President & Director of Training*



*L to R (standing) Greg Swenson, Ruurd Speelman, Terry O'Meara, Tony Lightman, Sue Hart*

*L to R (seated) Ken Holzman, Jenny Brockis, Carol Brands, Wayne Passmore, Trevor Denholm, Margaret Heyns, David Price, Mavis Carruthers, Aldis Purins, Alain Bernay, Marianne McAdam, Kerry Fitzsimons*

## STOP PRESS!!

The Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year heats have been run and won. Congratulations to the finalists:

- Ellita Hart (Club 15)
- Lynne Ellis (Club 52)
- Fmn Sue Hart (Club 30)
- Jenny Brockis (Club 34)

A big THANKYOU to the 22 competitors, the host clubs and fellow members and friends who went along to provide a supportive audience. The AGSOY Final will be held on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> October at Wesley College, Swan Street South Perth at 7pm.

## What's on in . . .

### OCTOBER

- 9 **Informer copy deadline**
- 12 **Speak up Speak out course**  
6.30pm to 9.30pm  
Shenton Pk Community Centre  
240 Onslow Road Shenton Park
- 19 **Dais Board meeting**  
6pm  
42 Newry Street Floreat
- 30 **Spring Convention**  
full day programme
  - ☛ details coming soon
- AGSOY Final**  
7pm for 7.30pm  
Wesley College  
Swan Street South Perth
  - ☛ details coming soon

### NOVEMBER

- 9 **Speak up Speak out course**  
details as for October
- 15 **Informer copy deadline**
- 16 **Dais Board meeting**  
details as for October
- 26 **Dais Reps meeting**  
Election of Office Bearers  
7pm  
Joan Watters Centre  
Jersey Street Wembley

Information and course registration:  
Rostrum Information Centre  
PO Box 5058, South Lake WA 6164  
Phone 08 6364 3411  
Fax 08 9467 0505  
[ric@rostrumwa.com.au](mailto:ric@rostrumwa.com.au)

Informer Editor Rose Fogliani  
Please send contributions to  
[rose.fogliani@agric.wa.gov.au](mailto:rose.fogliani@agric.wa.gov.au)

**Spring Convention is almost here ...**



# Former Speaker of the Year finds his voice

*Rostrum is publicly acknowledged in a variety of ways, often in a most appreciated fashion. On Sunday 25th July a book was launched at a private function in East Fremantle. The book, Doorway in the Storm - A Vietnam Veteran Comes Home, was written by former Horizons Club 49 member and 2000 Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year winner, Errol Pentony.*



*Former Club 49 members Fmn Elvern Webb, Fmn Carole Webb, Linda Dose, Errol Pentony, Pat Tassel, Wendy Wetton and Mike Wetton*

The book tells Errol's personal story of a Vietnam veteran's torturous, more than 30 year journey to find peace of mind and self acceptance following his harrowing war-time experiences.

Although appearing to function normally and generally successfully, Errol continually suffered deep inner turmoil and

torment. He felt unable to express himself in the manner he wished, he wanted to find his own voice.

Errol spent years undergoing veteran's counselling. During that time, after an unsuccessful promotional interview, he saw a notice advertising Rostrum in a local paper. His immediate intention was simply to become more adept at work meetings and promotional interviews. He joined Horizons Club 49 in Kingsley when it was starting and found it suited not only work needs but his personal need to build confidence and find his voice.

In 1999 Errol was chosen to represent WA in the Sidney Wicks Speaking Competition in Hobart. The following year he became Rostrum WA's champion speaker when he won the Arthur Garvey trophy.

Now living in retirement at Singleton, Errol is not only a published author but finally at peace. In his book he credits Rostrum on several occasions for its assistance in his journey to 'find his voice and inner peace'.

Among those present at the book launch were family, friends and a number of former Rostrum Club 49 members who, of course, are also considered friends.

The book is available from Errol who can be contacted on [errolpentony@smartchat.net.au](mailto:errolpentony@smartchat.net.au). He is also available as a keynote speaker and for workshops.

*Freeman Elvern Webb*

# Freeman Dave Williams revisits 'the tree'

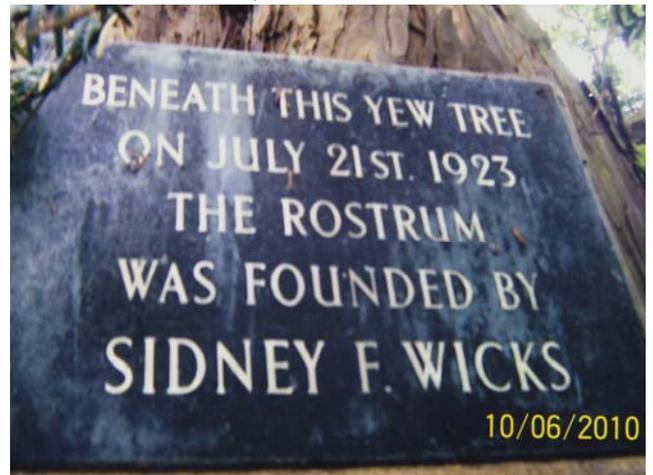
Three years ago while visiting the UK I went to the birthplace of Rostrum at Greendale Farm, about five miles from Wilmslow and 15 miles south of Manchester Airport. I submitted an article to the Informer (August 2007). At the following Dais Reps meeting, Roy Dowsett (Club 48) asked me if I'd seen the plaque on the tree. Unfortunately, nobody had told me there was a plaque.

Little did I realise then that I would ever get back, but this year we did go back to the UK, as well as Europe where we took a cruise down the Danube.

Driving from Colwyn Bay in North Wales to Manchester Airport I set the GPS for Greendale Farm. After ending up one street out and making enquiries at the next village, I came to the large wooden gates of the farm which I remembered from three years ago. The lady who opened up remembered me and called her father. He was very helpful and, with my wife Judy, held back the branches while I took photos of the plaque. He told me the tree is heritage-listed, so will not be cut down. He then said he has a book with the name of a former Australian Prime Minister in it. He gave me his email address and said if anyone was coming over to let him know a few hours beforehand as he would like to be there to show them the tree.

I have booked him for the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023. He also said that the lady from whom he bought the farm was the original owner and he'd kept in touch with her. It was one of the highlights of our trip, and I repeat from three years ago – will Rostrum be around as long as the tree?

*Freeman Dave Williams, Club 14*



# Terry O'Meara's winning speech -- 'Feel the Fear'

'One return ticket from Perth to Fremantle, please sir.'

The ticket clerk looked up at the young soldier resplendent in his new uniform, his handsome face smiling out from under the brim of his slouch hat.

'Mum said no son of hers is going off to war on a one way ticket,' he explained.

The soldier tucked the ticket into the breast pocket of his uniform and was soon swallowed up by the sea of khaki that flooded into the train's carriages bound for Fremantle to board a ship headed for the war in Europe.

The year was 1916 and one would have expected that the news of heavy losses at Gallipoli the previous year would reduce enlistments but they had in fact increased sixfold in the intervening months. Young men in search of adventure who thought that they were 10 feet tall and bullet proof. They just did not feel the fear, frightened only that the war might end before they got there. In 1916 Gallipoli veterans joined with fresh young troops from Australia to fight in northern France. Their first taste of trench warfare was on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 1916 near the little known town of Fromelles. They came under the command of two British generals, Haig and Haking, who told them that the artillery would smash through the German defences and lay them open to attack. 'It would be a walk in the park.'

They were wrong and the young diggers had no choice but to place their faith in commanders who had failed to adapt to the new ways of mechanised warfare. Poor reconnaissance, inadequate preparation, flawed execution and lack of cover combined with the depth and experience of the German defenders predisposed the young diggers to calamitous failure. The casualties that night were devastating. Out of 7000 attackers 5533 were killed, wounded or taken prisoner: the greatest loss of life in one night from any cause in Australia's history.

There can be few more stark examples of the futility of war than the destruction of these young men as a result of the stupidity and cavalier

indifference of their commanders. Whether the intention was to protect the reputations of the commanders or because authorities could feel the fear of a possible backlash from the Australian public, details of the battle were conveniently airbrushed from all news reports. Although it was Australia's first action on the western front and our worst military tragedy the battle of Fromelles never found its way into our history books and no Australian war memorial records that the battle ever took place. Despite the heavy losses suffered that night hundreds of Australians broke through the German front line trenches but, with no plan for holding their ground or adequate back up, they were trapped by the German counter attack and slaughtered. The fate of those who died behind the German lines was to remain unknown for more than 90 years.

Without question the worst news that a family can receive of their loved one is to be told that he is missing in action. Young wives would have their widow's pensions denied because they were unable to prove the death of their husbands. More often than not mothers would live out their lives in pain of the unknown until they would go to their graves without ever knowing. Annie Stalgis was one of a thousand mothers who clung to the hope that her son, Gregory, would come home one day. All the while she could feel the fear that she would never see him again. For years after the war until her death in 1941, she would stand at the garden gate at the end of each day looking down the road waiting for him to come home. As far as their families or the rest of the world knew, on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 1916 these young men simply disappeared near a small village in France.

They would have remained in the mists of history if it had not been for a Greek born Australian art teacher from Melbourne who made it his quest to find them almost 90 years later. Lambis Englezos is a quiet, unassuming man. Although he was born in Greece he developed his hobby as an amateur military historian through his interest in the Anzacs and a strong love for his adopted country. These days Lambis is

about as Greek as a vegemite sandwich. One day while reading a book on Australia's famous victory at Pozieres in 1916 he came across a reference to a previous battle at Fromelles that he had not heard of before. Lambis' interest in Fromelles began to grow to such an extent that he travelled to France in 1996 for the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle. But it was in 2002 while visiting the Australian cemetery at VC corner that he became aware that the number of Australians buried in the area was less than the number of names of the missing engraved on the memorial. This led him to wonder how many there were who remained unfound. A growing feeling welled up inside him. These missing diggers were waiting for him to find them.

On his return to Australia Lambis began extensive research to find out how many were missing, who they were and where they were. His passion had now become an obsession. He gathered a small close knit group of like minded amateurs around him who became known as the Lambis team. Their research of cemetery records confirmed that approximately 170 diggers had not been officially buried. A study of aerial photographs taken before and after the battle in 1916 revealed an area of disturbed ground near a place called Pheasant Wood. The Germans had kept impeccable records from which it was possible to confirm that they had buried foreign troops in a mass grave at Pheasant Wood. More importantly, before doing so, they recorded the names of the dead from their identification tags. Lambis was confident now that he had the number of missing soldiers, their names and where they could be found.

The team sent its findings to the Australian Army and the Department of Veterans' Affairs but all they met with were road blocks, dead ends and prevarication. Reluctantly Lambis decided to go to the press and began to lobby, cajole and harass all forms of the media. His cajoling seemed to have paid off when an article in *The Australian* on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2003 introduced the story of the missing soldiers to the Australian public for the first time.

.....continued on next page

## Feel the Fear

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His team was invited to present its case to a special government panel of experts but some 18 months later no progress had been made.

In the meantime support for the cause continued to grow and in July 2006 Lambis was interviewed on *60 Minutes* in front of two million TV viewers. Finally, in December that year, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Bruce Billson, announced that he had appointed Dr Tony Pollard from the Centre of Battlefield Archaeology in Glasgow to carry out an investigation of the Pheasant Wood site. In May 2007 Dr Pollard reported that he had found sufficient evidence to support an excavation of the site. This work began in May 2008 and it soon became evident that the site did, in fact, contain human remains. In the months that followed the skeletal remains of 250 British and Australian soldiers were recovered from the mass grave. The elderly French couple who owned the farm on which the grave was found donated the property so that a proper cemetery could be built. Usable DNA was extracted from all 250 skeletons prompting calls for relatives of the deceased to supply DNA samples to help identify them.

When the remains of Gregory Stalgis were identified from DNA supplied by descendants of Annie Stalgis, a family member visited Annie's grave in Sydney to tell her – 'Annie- we found him'

Since February this year the missing soldiers of Fromelles have each been reburied in their own graves with full military honours. Young men who fought so bravely now had no reason to feel the fear that they would never be found. The last soldier was buried just 12 days ago on 19<sup>th</sup> July, exactly 94 years after his death, as part of the dedication ceremony for the new cemetery. This closed the saddest chapter in Australian military history that would not have been possible without the hard work and tenacity of Lambis Englezos and his team.

Among the remains of one soldier was a small folded piece of paper, crushed and broken like his dreams of a journey home that was never made. Barely legible on the paper were the printed words:

'One return ticket from Perth to Fremantle'

*Reproduced by request.  
Thanks Terry — Ed.*

## Rostrum Voice of Youth National Final, Brisbane, 31<sup>st</sup> July

We arrived in Brisbane for the National Final late on Thursday evening and as always the weather was warm. On Friday the students had lunch together and generally got to know one another. In the evening we went to a reception at Clayton Utz, a large law firm in the city, where the students had a chance to meet Rostrum members and also to hear two former Rostrum Voice of Youth competitors speak, Christopher Waterhouse from Sydney and Izaak Lim from Perth. Both of these young men are excelling in their fields so it was good for the students hear them as well as get to talk to them at the reception.

Early on Saturday morning the students went off to climb the Storey Bridge, then it was back into the competition with a practice at the venue in preparation for the big event. That evening we were off to All Hallows School for the competition. Shane Chandra and Tom Kerrigan certainly did Western Australia proud! Both were placed third in their division and both spoke exceptionally well, receiving many compliments from the adjudicators and members of the audience.

On Sunday the students went to a picnic and tree planting to celebrate the 80th Anniversary of Rostrum. Sadly then it was time to come home and we headed back to Perth on the late night flight.

Next year the Rostrum Voice of Youth National Final is to be held in Perth and we would welcome a big crowd for the Final on the last weekend of July. Information for this will be in the *Informer* as it becomes available. The Rostrum Voice of Youth committee are already in full swing and looking forward to the big year ahead in 2011.

*Juliet Park, WA Rostrum Voice of Youth Coordinator*

## Dais appoints a Director of Club Development

As part of Rostrum WA's drive to improve Rostrum and the service it gives to its members the Dais has appointed Freeman Terry O'Meara as its Director of Club Development.

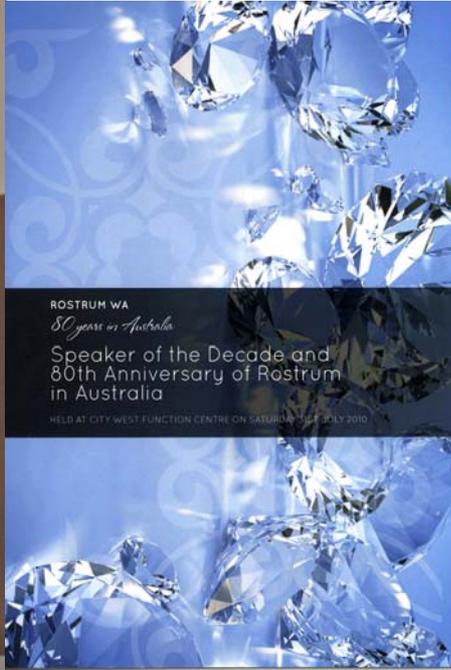
Terry will visit clubs where it is considered that some assistance is required to improve meetings and help increase membership. Regular reviews of Rostrum and its practices are being carried out and Terry will assist in relaying new ideas and training methods to WA's Rostrum Clubs. If you have a particular problem or you have ideas to improve and advance Rostrum in WA please do not hesitate to contact Chris Stone, David Price, Tony Lightman or Terry O'Meara. Phone numbers and email addresses can be found in the Rostrum Syllabus.

*Freeman Terry O'Meara, Director of Club Development*



**Training is everything.  
The peach was once a bitter  
almond; cauliflower is nothing  
but a cabbage with a college  
education.**

*Mark Twain*



*The Freeman's Promise*

