



ROSTRUM

INFORMER

December 2013

Newsletter of Rostrum Western Australia

www.rostrum.com.au/wa



Nearly there

We really are in the countdown to Christmas. I hope you receive this before Christmas but if you don't you can blame me, not Rose. It's been one of those weeks (months?)

Last weekend I was down in Albany with Southern Star Speaking Club (Club 63), as guest at their Christmas dinner and I was blown away. When I was

there two years ago they had about 20 people attending. This year it was 40+ and a really great evening. Getting out into their community has really lifted their membership and shows why they deserved the David Price Award for Best Country Club.

The other reason for my attendance was to perform the pleasant task of elevating Mike Reed to the position of Freeman. Mike is one of the founding members of Club 63 and, starting with Club 41 Albany, also attended Club 56 Geraldton.

Because Chris Walker and I were the only two Freeman present, it wasn't appropriate to do the usual 'this speaker' speech, so I announced up front what I was going to do. Even so, the look on Speaker Mike's face was priceless. I now know what I looked like four years ago when I received my Freemanship.

Albany is a very vibrant club and I'd urge any members who are down in Albany, whether for business or pleasure, to go along to a meeting. I know they'll make you feel welcome.

This has been another enjoyable year for me, culminating in another great Speaker of the Year final and Annual Dinner. My thanks to Freeman Karen Reid for all the great work she's done and to Editor Rose Fogliani for such a superb write up.

After the high of Speaker of the Year, we had a bit of a low with the Dais meeting in November, with a total of only eight members attending. We conducted the appointment of office bearers (President, Secretary and Treasurer) for next year but will have this ratified at the February Dais meeting. As of now, I am President for another year; after volunteering, Luke Matthews from Club 2230 has been appointed Secretary and the position of Treasurer is vacant, so I may be tapping one of you on the shoulder!

My special thanks to Freeman Rick Staker, who has stepped down as Secretary, for his contribution over the last four years. He's really done a great job. Also my thanks to Freeman Terry O'Meara, who took on the Treasurer's role in 2012, and then also took on the organisation of the 2012 Convention. Both Rick and Terry have contributed beyond their formal roles. Graham Minchin is also not continuing due to work and family pressures, as well as the biking accident he had a couple of months ago which seriously hindered his mobility.

My thanks also to those Board members who are continuing next year. Rostrum WA is lucky to have such committed people and I look forward to working with them for another year.

Finally, to you and all your families, a happy, safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year. I look forward to seeing many of you around Rostrum in 2014.

Freeman Tony Lightman, President, Rostrum WA

Critics Council Workshop

Rostrum WA's newest Critics were invited to share their experiences of the transition from Rostrum member to Critic at the Critics Council Workshop in November. Sue White (2230), Luke Matthews (2230) and Alan Ham (15) gave presentations on what they liked about the Critics Training Course earlier this year as well as suggestions for improvement in future courses. Jo Turbett (2230), who was unable to attend, provided her insights by email.

'You cannot learn to ride a bike by reading a book', an observation by Sue, and 'It's all learning by doing in Rostrum', from Jo, summed up the feeling of all the Critics at the workshop.

The main points addressed in the presentations included:

Training over two weekends and lots of practice

The format of Critics Training – two days over consecutive weekends – received overwhelming approval. The week's interval was deemed essential to enable trainees to review the theory covered in the course. They agreed that constant practice and feedback were the key to mastering the skills required to provide effective critiques, and recognised the value of the many opportunities for this during the course itself and later in their clubs in preparation for accreditation.

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Achievements & Accolades

New members inducted in 2013

Club	New Members
15	12
2230	11
5	10
19,64	8
4&8,33,42	5
11,21,50	4
63	3
52	2
1&2,14,34	1
Total	84

Congratulations to the following members:

PDP	Jacqui Lamplugh (15) Wilma Ferguson (63) Christine Vilim (15) Sue White (19) Frank Raccauia (19) Elise Rosenberg (50)
IDP	Joanna Whitney (11) Jo Turbett (2230)
Critic	Paul Turbett (2230) Jo Turbett (2230) Luke Matthews (2230) Sue White (19) Alan Ham (15) (re-accreditation)

THANK YOU to everyone who contributed to the *Informer* this year – your input is much appreciated. The next issue is due out in February 2014. Please send your articles and advance notices of events by mid-January to

informer@rostrumwa.com.au.

I wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Rose Fogliani (Editor)



VALE

Stephen Alexander Sharp, 1951 - 2013



It was with shock and great sadness that members of Rostrum Foundation Club 1/2 learnt of the death of their long time member and friend, Stephen Sharp.

Stephen is remembered as a vibrant man who was passionate about cricket, football and life in general. For many years he was the Scorer for CBC Cricket Club and a member of East Fremantle Football Club. He was always ready with his opinions on the best strategy for the teams he supported and had a wealth of knowledge of both sports.

He was devoted to Vandra, his partner of nearly 30 years, and a very proud and loving father to 10-year-old Jemeeka. He took early retirement from the Department of Consumer Affairs and delighted in the opportunity to spend time with Jemeeka and drive her to and from school.

Sadly a serious illness in 2012 meant he could no longer drive but it failed to dim his enthusiasm and passion for life and for Rostrum. His unfailing cheerfulness, his readiness to speak on any subject, often at length, his humour and his love of life made a wonderful contribution to our club.

At a meeting post Stephen's funeral members reminisced about his participation in the club and of course several highlights couldn't go unmentioned because they sum up Stephen's zest for 'doing it his way'.

Over the years we were entertained with stories about Stephen and Vandra's shopping and movie visits with Jarra (Vandra's gorgeous toy poodle) secreted into a favourite carrier bag so she too could enjoy shopping and movie visits. Many of us have enjoyed Jarra's attendance at Rostrum meetings where she slept soundly on a chair next to Stephen.

In addition Stephen and Vandra's daughter Jemeeka was a guest at our club on a number of occasions and impressed the membership with her speaking capabilities that were very advanced for her young age.

Despite the seriousness of Stephen's illness he never complained. He just got on with things in his own special way.

We shall miss Stephen.

Pamela Hardy, Craig Billing, Aldis Purins, Club 1/2

Congratulations to Club Speakers of the Year and Award winners



Club 50

Freeman Susan L'Herpinierie (left) won the Open Division of Club 50's annual speaking competition, the Stand Alone Challenge; Britney Harrison (centre) won the Novice Division. Soon Hong (right), won the Freeman John Duffield Perpetual Award for Most Improved Speaker.



Club 63

Southern Star Speaking Club held its end of year dinner at The Stirling Club Albany, with our special guests Freeman Tony Lightman and his lovely wife Ros who had travelled from Perth for the occasion.

The night was well attended as we had a couple of big successes to celebrate, the most popular one being the news that Speaker Mike shall now be known as Freeman Mike, and what well-deserved and welcome news that was! Freeman Mike has put his heart and soul into Rostrum over the years and it is good to see his hard work and dedication to Rostrum and its members recognised. Congratulations Freeman Mike!

For the second year, Southern Star Speaking Club has been awarded the Country Club of Excellence Award. Our thanks to the Marketing Committee, Speaker Paul, Speaker Andrea and Speaker Rin and also to all our club members for consistent hard work and input.

Paul Reilly won both Speaker of the Year and Chairman of the Year; David Griffiths, Most Improved Speaker and Rin Hills, Best Club Person. Paul Reilly's hard work behind the scenes was also acknowledged with a Certificate of Appreciation. It is with regret we say goodbye to Paul as he is off to pastures new, and we wish him all the best in his new ventures.

Finally, a BIG thank you to all club members for the hard work and resulting continued success of Southern Star Speaking Club as we look forward to a new and exciting year. Have a very happy and safe Christmas.

David Cronin, President, Southern Star Speaking Club



Club 2230

Congratulations to all our finalists this year: Freeman Sue Hart, Matthew Park, Luke Matthews and Adell Griffiths. The winner of the Freeman Terry Walker Speaker of the Year Competition was Freeman Sue Hart.

Sue shared an inspirational story of a man who became a paraplegic after his spine snapped in a farming machinery accident. As the story unfolded this young man rose to the occasion, after the tragedy, to remain a charismatic and attractive person. Sue left the audience with a message that when tragedy strikes it is a person's character that helps them make the most of the situation and lead a productive life.

Jo Turbett, President, Club 2230



Club 15

Newcomer to Rostrum, Andrew Cotterell (right) won Club 15's Speaker of the Year competition with a thought-provoking speech on racism in Australia. Aldis Purins (Club 1/2) presented the David Mead trophy. Wilf Hendricks won the trophy for Most Improved Speaker.



Clubs 21 and 39

Club 39's Bruce Young (left) won the trophy for the Speaker of the Year (Senior Competition), presented by President Roy Dowsett. Ron Kang (Club 21) won the Novice Competition.

A Taxonomist's Noel

Science, like sex, is often fun but rarely amusing. Christmas is just the opposite. Scientists who try to be comic, like clowns at parties, tend to plough sadly on, regardless. The low point comes when they name plants and animals. The need for millions of Latin terms, and a free hand in so doing, has led to great families of names, some droll, others much less so, from the orchid *Aa* to the jellyfish *Zyzyzus*. Some, like *Scrotum humanus* (once thought to be the intimate remnants of a giant but in fact the leg joints of a dinosaur) are unwittingly witty, but most make too much of an effort. Even so, with the help of *Sanctacaris* (a primitive animal, long extinct, best translated as Santa Claws) one can, with a mussel-bound *Abra cadabra*, conjure up a taxonomist's dream Christmas.

Who to invite to the feast? *Mamma* the snail and *Gramma* the fish will insist on coming, whatever the salamander *Oedipus complex* might say. For more attractive company one could try the molluscs *Amanda*, *Daphne*, *Doris*, *Fiona*, *Julia*, *Mathilda*, *Melanie*, *Patricia* and *Sallya*. If snails are not enough, invite the fish called *Clara*, *Liza* and *Rita*, not to mention *Diana* (*Camilla*, alas, is a kind of fly). For consorts, any old *Ptomaspis*, *Dikaspis* or *Ariaspis* (fish fossils: try dropping the specific name of the viper, *aspis*) will do.

And what about dinner? One could be safe and try *Cannabis* (a tasty bird) followed by *Ambrosia* (not creamed rice, but knapweed). As an alternative, while slaving at the kitchen *Formica* your ant might whip up a dish of molluscan *Exotica* or a *Box* of fish. If not well cooked, this brings the danger of making the guests feel waspish (*Veræ peculya*) or even of the onset of a bout of *Emesis*, *Sepsis*, *Dialysis* or *Townselitus* (all of them insects). In the worst of all worlds, the meal might be followed by an attack of *Dyaria* (a moth named in honour of the eminent Dr Dyar), which could force the unfortunate company to face the *Enema pan* or the *Colon forceps* (both beetles) before they fall off their perch and turn *Beliope*.

Oops (a spider; the name also given by mistake to a beetle), what a *Neardisaster* ('no point around a star'; the shape of this starfish's mouth) that would be! And then there is the dreadful stuff on television. During the *Hiatus* (the fly) before the Queen's speech it is bound to be something like *Batman* (a fish), *Draculo* (another one), *Godzilla* (a crab), *Cinderella* (no flies on her), the spiders *Draculoides* (*bramstokeri* is the scary one) and *Apopyllus nov*; or the three *Muscatheres* (just three species of these bee flies). Later there will be reruns of fossilised humour – it is *Montypythonoides* (a dead snake) again.

Then we have to listen to *Papa* (the bird's) endless *Saga* about cricket, which always ends in *Anticlimax* with a fossil snail. Perhaps we can bug him with a quick snog (*Ochisme*, anyone; *Polychisme*, *Dolichisme*, *Marichisme*, *Nanichisme*, *Florichisme*, *Peggichisme*?) beneath the mistletoe before flying (*Iyaiyai*, *Ohmyia omya*) upstairs in the hope of a pitch-pine (*Pinus rigida*) bedstead and a quick opossum or *Philander*. Then it's time for a toast (*Veni vidivici* if you're an extinct parrot) to the wasps – *Heerx lukenatcha*, old boy; *Heerx tooya*, too! – and to perch with *Banjoes* before bursting into song. *Ia, Ia io* has a batty refrain, as do *La cucaracha* and *La paloma* (not

cockroaches or doves but moths) and the great horsefly *balzaphire*. A piece by the musical bee *Mozartella beethoveni*, or the chiggers *Trombicula doremi* and *T. fasola* for seashell *Chorus* accompanied by snails on *Tuba* might follow. As a *Bonus*, the limpet could sing a tree *Aria*, although that raises the danger of such *Cacophonia* that everyone clams up.

At Christmas, the scarab *Euphoria* in its leafhopper *Nirvana* soon gives way to *Hades*, the *Notoreas* butterflies from hell. *Lucifer*, *Satan* and *Mephisto* (more fish), the shark *Gollum* and *Caligula* (a moth) make their metaphorical appearance. Under these circumstances, who can blame the deranged biologist as he exclaims: 'Bloodiella! Pisonen! you parasitic wasps! Bugeranus, you wattled cranes, and *Ba humbugi*, you snails from the island of Mbal, you can't be the cactus *Cereus*! *Ytu brutus*, I intend to beetle off; I'm going to *Dissup irae*!' (a very small insect).

He conquers his *Agra phobia* (see below), puts up his snail *Umbrella* and leaps into his weevil (or *Car*) – be it *Amercedes* (another weevil), a beetle (*Agra vation*) or a fishy old *Sierra* – and drives with a bee fly of unorthodox tastes to the *Villa sodom* for a curry, pausing on the way to pick up a can of Indian beans from his *Lablab lablab*...

Enough, enough! I invoke the Sanity Clause (thank you, Groucho) in my book contract.

Steve Jones, *The Single Helix* 2005

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### Learning by watching and listening to others

Sue, Jo, Luke and Alan considered careful observation of experienced Critics – paying attention to what aspects of a presentation Critics commented on, what they said and how they said it – beneficial to their own development as Critics. Visiting other clubs to observe different Critics in action helped broadened their perspective.

### Begin training in the club, well before Critics Training

Critics Training should be opened up to observers, to show them what is involved, familiarise them with the material, and give potential trainees some idea of the standard required of a Critic, before undertaking the course. It was widely agreed that training should start in the home clubs up to a semester before Critics Training. Experienced Critics could identify and mentor potential trainees, introducing them to the What-Why-How-Show system of providing feedback, discussing a variety of presentations, and providing feedback on practice critiques during the Rostrum meeting. Critics Training could then concentrate on refining the skills learned in the club and preparing trainees for accreditation. Training in the club could be formalised as a critiquing exercise in the IDP.

### Continuing accreditation

Just as people in business need to maintain and upgrade skills to remain relevant and effective, all Critics should undertake reaccreditation periodically (every 3-5 years was suggested) to ensure they continue to deliver useful critiques. A half or full day refresher course, or attending Critics Training as an observer, may suffice to maintain the quality of Rostrum's Critics and help ensure there is an accredited Critic available at every Rostrum meeting in every club.